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The Impact of Virtual Communities on Cultural Identity

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Piotr Kwiatek and Vesna Baltezarevic

Abstract: The emergence of the Internet and various forms of virtual communities has led to the impact of a new social space on individuals who frequently replace the real world with alternative forms of socializing. In virtual communities, new 'friendships' are easily accepted; however, how this acceptance influences cultural identity has not been investigated. Based on the data collected from 443 respondents in the Republic of Serbia, authors analyze this connexion, as well as how the absorption of others' cultural values is reflected on the local cultural values. The results show that the adoption of others' cultural values diminished the bond with the local community. The present paper adds to the theory of virtual communities by examining the relationship between the acceptance of an unknown person in a virtual community and its effects on cultural identity. This study contributes to the clarification of the impact that virtual networking has on cultural identity.

Keywords: cultural identity, cultural values, individual, virtual community.

Introduction

The way people perceived the world around themselves, until the emergence of the Internet and digital media, depended on their conception of reality based, inter alia, on cultural traditions and folk tales. The Internet restructured the way of organizing social and interest communities and enabled the emergence of new media that combine the potentials of previous media with the intention of creating hybrid social and cultural forms. The contemporary conception of reality is largely influenced by virtual networking. This marks the beginning of a revolution that, as Clay Shirky (2009) states, changes not only what we do and how we do it, but who we are. According to Alexandr Asmolov and Gregory Asmolov, "The idea of a virtual community was initially built around the need to present one's own true identity or, more precisely, personal identity on the network." (Asmolov and Asmolov 2009, 111) However, these new, technologically mediated, forms of social interaction have changed the very way people form groups and the way they exist within them. Communication within virtual community creates new opportunities for people to interact and communicate, facilitating the development of new social relations (Ellison et al. 2014).

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In a virtual community, users can interact, exchange ideas, share information, provide social support, do business, direct activities, create art, play games, participate in a political debate, etc. All this is an indicator of the formation of a culture, which is directly opposed to the processes of maintaining the traditional linear culture and the values it represents. Digital media and modern technologies seem to prevail and suppress traditional cultural values and their content.

New technological inventions and the corresponding media stemming from them have become the means of modern identity transformation (Brigs and Berk 2006), because instead of genuine participation in social life, they provide a surrogate of sociality (Fenerback and Thompson 1995, 18). At the same time, the community culture is being transformed into a culture of isolation, within which people do not address real persons, but physically absent persons, represented by the computer screens (Makner 2006, 291).

This paper explores how the acceptance of unknown persons online influences cultural identity and how the absorption of others' cultural values affects the traditional cultural values of virtual community users.

Literature Review

The term 'virtual community' was coined by Rheingold (1993, 5), in the first edition of his book with the same title. As to the very concept of virtual communities, there is no consensus on the underlying phenomenon. For example, Linda Harasim (1993) argues that virtual communities actually belong to pseudo-communities, while Margaret McLaughlin, Kerry Osborne and Christine Smith (1995) hold that virtual communities should be treated as metaphors for communities.

The existence of virtual communities indicates that the Internet is not only the medium through which people access information, but through which they also reach out to other people, in order to talk, exchange opinions and build relationships (Sproull and Faraj 1997). Social networks today are the predominant type of virtual communities. They are based on either a website or a platform that focuses on forming relationships and allowing participants to invite their acquaintances. These are the people coming from different user network environments, such as family, friends, co-workers, and neighbours (Joinson 2008). Such platforms allow their users to "track the actions, beliefs and interests of the larger groups to which they belong." (Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield 2006, 167)

Since a virtual community allows individuals to break social barriers and facilitates contacts with heterogeneous individuals, it allows for the formation of a virtual group identity. Members of a virtual community establish a group identity and a sense of belonging on the interactive network platform (Blanchard 2007). Further, through consecutive communication and information exchange among members, a bridged social capital is formed (Dixon 2005). "Through

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virtual interaction with others, the individual gradually builds personal identity based on these experiences, while the media serve only as an accessible reference framework for the building of collective and personal identities." (Strinati 1995, 239) Interestingly, though, Mirjana Ule notes that "who or what we are, is not so much a matter of personal essence (beliefs, feelings, etc.), but of how we are constructed through a variety of relationships, interactions, etc." (Ule 2000, 249)

Virtual communities, as a product of mass culture, are breaking all intercultural barriers. In other words, as Dwight MacDonald shows, virtual community "mixes and scrambles everything together, producing what could be called homogenized culture." (MacDonald 2005, 42) In this sense, technologically mediated human activity may lead to alienation from nature and typical forms of social interaction. Undoubtedly, we can speak of a change in human nature, in the existing forms of socialization, in mutual interactions, and in understanding the world, a change which happens simultaneously with the process of remodelling the existing personal identity.

The development of virtual relationships and new identities provides increased opportunities for cultural, social and political exchanges on a global level, regardless of geographical locations and time zones. A decade ago, Sherry Turkle noted that new forms of interaction were already challenging "what many people have traditionally called 'identity'; a sense of self is recast in terms of multiple windows and parallel lives" (Turkle 1997, 73), which allows virtual communities' users to establish a connection with different cultures.

In this view, multiculturalism destroys personal perception of local beliefs and traditional cultural values by destroying distinctive traits of the local identity. This way, virtual culture, as a globally oriented culture, shapes the cultural elements of the common way of life of people through the process of globalization that inevitably undermines local cultures. "Therefore, it is perceived as an expression of sweeping and overwhelming that undermines local cultures. The latter, on the other hand, refers to variation and diversity of culture." (KOÇ 2006, 5)

Edmund Jandt (2012, 5) emphasizes that, according to Antonio Damasio, culture functions as a regulator of human life and human identity. He further argues that the development of the brain and human identity is opposite to the indifference of nature and opens the door to the emergence of culture – a radical shift on the evolutionary path and a new basis for the regulation of life, which he calls 'socio-cultural homeostasis.' Alan Fiske (2002, 8) emphasizes that "Culture is a socially constructed constellation consisting of things like practices, competences, ideas, schemes, symbols, values, norms, institutions, constituent rules and modifications of the physical environment."

In times of technological revolution, networked life and technology-mediated communication, there is a need for positioning cultural identity on the varied and plastic platform constructed upon the interrupted continuity of the

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former 'solid' character of peoples and cultures, especially in relation to the context of globalization. Interpretation on the notion of identity in the process of globalization points to the question of the use of historical, linguistic and cultural resources in the process of constant formation of identity, not in function of what we are, but what we are aiming for, what we are becoming, how we are presented, and how identity is reflected on the ways we represent ourselves.

According to Douglas Kellner (1992), the question of identity continues to be a problem in the postmodern era; in contemporary society, instead of disappearing, identity suffers a process of reconstruction and redefinition. In this interpretation, identity becomes similar to a game of choice, in which a person radically changes identities at his/her own discretion, which can easily get out of control. Kellner's ambivalence reflects the actual ambivalence of the problem itself. Identity continues to be a 'problem,' as Kellner highlights, and, in the current changing context, influenced by the development of technology (social communities, networked life, the construction of online identity) it is not the same kind of problem as in the modern era, nor is it of the same complexity.

Virtual community has deconstructed the term 'friendship' and pushed it towards insignificance. Network users have ongoing interactions with people from different cultures. Media contribute to the rapid and wide spread of ideas in all cultures because virtual communities allow users to closely interact with other people (Schlegel 2001). The global world and barrier-free communication enable the development of a global identity that gives a sense of belonging to the world culture and allows users to communicate with people from different places through media technology (such as Facebook). Such changes can lead to a reduced innate identity in relation to a hybrid identity, through combining the elements of a local culture with the elements of the global culture (Hermans and Kempen 1998), which can lead to identity confusion (Hermans and Dimaggio 2007). However, regardless of the fact that virtual identities are different from physical identities, studies suggest that virtual identities become parts of physical identity (Boyd 2014). In contrast to this, Jean Baudrillard, in his *Simulacra and Simulation* states that "the society has developed too much of a dependence on the models, maps and representations of life that has caused us to lose touch with the realm of the real." He further claims that we live in a "state of hyperreal." (Baudrillard 1994, 4)

The formation of virtual communities changes the way we see reality and traditionally defined identity (Jones 1995), because globalization "refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space." (Steger 2009, 15) Globalization as a dialectically dynamic process causes the transformation of a local cultural identity into a cultural identity of diversity, which is increasingly moving away from the local one and adheres to the global world.

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Table 1. Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Culture	Culture is not simply art, music and literature; it is the total collection of behavioral patterns, values and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people.	Novitz and Willmott 1990, 5
	Culture performs a role of 'identification of otherness.'	Friedman 1996, 72
	Culture as "a learned set of shared perceptions about beliefs, values, and norms."	Lustig and Koester 1993, 42
Cultural identity	The term *cultural identity* refers to an individual's sense of self derived from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life.	Kim 2001
Cultural identity components	Cultural identity includes at least six commonalities: vocation, class, geography, philosophy, language, and biology.	Beamer and Varner 2005, 5
Unknown persons	People focus on meeting new virtual people and being seen by many people, rather than maintaining their already existing relationships. People from collectivistic cultures utilize social network sites to "maintain close relationships with a small number of ties instead of creating new connections with people."	Rosen, Stefanone, and Lackaff 2010

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Virtual identity	Virtual identity consists of two entities in both real world and the virtual world.	Halperin 2008
Social network weak ties	Social networking sites allow users to keep in touch with existing friends and to develop new friendships.	Boyd 2004
	Weak ties allow users to create and maintain larger, diffuse networks of relationships from which they could potentially draw resources.	Donath and Boyd 2004
	Weak ties provide benefits not available in close ties: information, resources, and novelty, as well as a sense of being 'known' in the larger community. Consequential strangers often act as 'bridges' to new people and groups.	Burt 1992
	Virtual environments provide the possibility of transformation and manipulation of identity.	Vander Valk 2008
Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community affects the change of cultural identity.	"A person recognizes oneself through the adaptation to the concept of 'we' as a primary form of understanding where one belongs. In this phase, a person accepts the norms, beliefs and experiences of his/her group as a 'proper place of living,' because within the collective security, one escapes from loneliness and from the threat of the unknown world he/she is unable to cope with, after birth."	Golubović 2011, 28

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	By communicating with virtual friends, people adopt their beliefs and cultural patterns, which inevitably lead to the reconstruction of their initial identities.	Jensen 2003
Adoption of others' cultural values influences the decrease in connection with the local community.	The use of new media leads to the destruction of cultural identity and the weakening of the intensity of relationships between people in the local community.	Singh 2010
	Internet use, they argued, would replace in-person interaction and long-distance online interaction would replace social interactions in local communities.	Nie 2001

Nadezda Bagdasaryan (2011) highlights that the speed and impact of new media have led to the inability of traditional values to keep pace with the new cultural values produced by new media. The use of new media leads to the destruction of cultural identity and the weakening of the intensity of relationships between people in the local community (Singh 2010), because virtual community users are opting for new ways of interacting with people from different cultures. Thus, virtual culture becomes a new form of common culture characterized by a higher degree of heterogeneity and a lower level of interconnection (Van Dijk 1998). By creating a space for establishing personal contacts within the network, with the flexibility of communication, new media directly influence the development of intercultural connections in a virtual community (Boyd and Ellision 2007; Donath and Boyd 2004) and the creation of a multicultural world formed by the implication of the experiences of those who are able to successfully move from one culture into another (Kim 2001). The transition from the local to the virtual cultural space presupposes a successful process of adaptation, that is, an acquaintance with an unknown cultural environment through the establishment and maintenance of a relatively stable, reciprocal and functional relationship with the environment (Gudykunst 2003).

This paper seeks to explore how the acceptance of unknown persons online influences cultural identity and how the absorption of others' cultural values is reflected in the traditional cultural values of virtual community users.

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Research Objectives

This article reports on a survey conducted to determine whether the virtual community acceptance of unknown persons as 'friends' influences cultural identity and how the adoption of others' cultural values in such a community is reflected in the connection with the local community. The objectives of this study are twofold:

i. To test whether the acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community affects the cultural identity of the respondents.

ii. To test whether other cultural values that respondents adopt from virtual friends contribute to a decreased connectivity with the primary community.

By analyzing existing theoretical considerations on the consequences of activities within virtual communities on the traditional identity of their users, the following hypotheses have been advanced:

H1: Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community determines/is associated with a change in cultural identity.

H2: Adoption of others' cultural values is associated with a decrease in connection with the local community.

Sample and Data Collection

The questionnaire with closed-type questions was composed of two parts. In the first part, questions were asked regarding the demographic profile of the respondents (gender, age and level of education). The second part of the questionnaire requested the respondents to answer closed-ended questions related to their behaviour on various virtual social networks, where respondents were offered answers in reference to the Likert scale of attitudes, anchored: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree.

The research was carried out by the authors through a specially prepared questionnaire sent to 556 addresses of employees and students at a private university based in Belgrade (Republic of Serbia). Data was collected from June 2017 to January 2018. A total of 443 fully filled questionnaires were selected for further research. The IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS 2015) was used to analyse the data collected from the survey. Data was analysed using descriptive statistic, chi-square test and measures of association.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N = 443)

Demographic		n	%
Gender			
	Male	201	45.4

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	Female	242	54.6
Age			
	<25	115	26.0
	26-35	128	28.9
	36-45	135	30.5
	46-55	43	9.7
	56-65	22	5.0
Education			
	High school	73	16.5
	Student	69	15.6
	Bachelor	166	37.5
	Master/Doctorate	135	30.5
Number of contacts			
	less than 100	36	8.1
	101-300	95	21.4
	301-500	85	19.2
	501 and more	227	51.2
Daily use of social media			
	less than 1 hour	59	13.3
	1-3 hours	205	46.3
	3-6 hours	98	22.1
	more than 6 hours	81	18.3

Table 2 shows descriptive demographics of the respondents. More female (54.6%) than male (45.4%) respondents are to be found, mostly in the 36-45 years of age group (30.5%), followed by respondents aged 26-35 years (28.9%) and by those less than 25 years of age (26.0%). The share of respondents above 45 years of age was 14.7%. Most of respondents had a university degree (37.5%), followed by the groups of respondents holding Master or Doctorate degrees (30.5%). The remaining groups are formed by respondents with completed secondary education (16.5%) and students (15.6%). Most respondents have 501 and more contacts (51.2%), followed by the groups with 101-300 contacts (21.4%), 301-500 (19.2%) and less than 100 (8.1%).

Most respondents use social media for 1-3 hours daily (46.3%), followed by those who spend 3-6 hours on social media (22.1%), more than 6 hours (18.3%) and less than one hour (13.3%).

Results and Discussion

(i) Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community determines/is associated with a change in cultural identity.

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Table 3. The attitude of the respondents towards the claim that virtual community participants accept unknown persons as friends

Scale position	n	%
Strongly disagree	18	4.1
Disagree	231	52.1
Neither agree nor disagree	127	28.7
Agree	55	12.4
Strongly agree	12	2.7
Total	443	100.0

Table 3 indicates that the highest percentage of respondents disagree that unknown persons should be accepted (52.1%), the next in percentage are those who do not have a fixed attitude (28.7%), followed by those who agree with accepting of unknown persons (12.4%), while the smallest percentage of respondents belongs to those who strongly disagree (4.1%) and those who strongly agree (2.7%).

Table 4. The attitude of the respondents towards the claim that virtual community affects the identity of its users

Scale position	N	%
Strongly disagree	25	5.6
Disagree	185	41.8
Neither agree nor disagree	103	23.3
Agree	117	26.4
Strongly agree	13	2.9
Total	443	100.0

Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents (41.8%) disagree that virtual community affects identity, followed by those who agree that networks affect identity (26.4%), and those who do not have a fixed attitude (23.3%), while the smallest percentage of respondents belongs to those who strongly disagree (5.6%), and strongly agree (2.9%).

A chi-square test was performed to verify the existence of a relationship between the attitude towards acceptance of unknown persons and the attitude towards changing of cultural identity. The relationship between these variables was significant, $\chi^2(16, 443) = 87.053$, $p<0.05$. We subsequently tested the strength of the relationship between focal variables using gamma measure of association. The association is positive, moderate and significant (G=.416, $p<0.05$), which means that the more respondents agree with the view that virtual community participants accept unknown persons, the more they support the view that online cultural identity is changing. Furthermore, because gamma is a Proportional Reduction in Error type of measure, it can be concluded that

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knowing the level of unknown person's acceptance improves the prediction of identity change by 41.6%.

(ii) Adoption of others' cultural values is associated with a decrease in connection with the local community.

Table 5. The attitude of respondents towards the claim that others' cultural values are being accepted within virtual community

Scale position	n	%
Strongly disagree	40	9.0
Disagree	47	10.6
Neither agree nor disagree	99	22.3
Agree	204	46.0
Strongly agree	53	12.0
Total	443	100.0

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents (46.0%) agree that others' cultural values are accepted within the network, with 22.3% without a fixed attitude, followed by a number of respondents who strongly agree (12.0%), who disagree (10.06%), while the fewest responses belong to those who strongly disagree (9.0%).

Table 6. The attitude of respondents towards the claim that the acceptance of others' cultural values influences the decrease of their connection with the local community.

Scale position	N	%
Strongly disagree	25	5.6
Disagree	60	13.5
Neither agree nor disagree	107	24.2
Agree	215	48.5
Strongly agree	36	8.1
Total	443	100.0

Table 6 indicates that the highest number of respondents (48.5%) agree that the acceptance of others' cultural values leads to a decrease in the connection with the local community, while 24.2% do not have a fixed attitude, followed by those who disagree (13.5%), those who strongly agree (8.1%), while the smallest percentage of respondents strongly disagree (5.6%).

A chi-square test was performed to verify the existence of a relationship between the attitude towards accepting others' cultural values and the attitude towards the connection with the local community. The relationship between these variables was significant, $\chi^2(16, 443) = 410.949$, $p<0.05$. We subsequently tested the strength of the relationship between focal variables using gamma

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measure of association. We found a strong and positive association (G=.714, p<0.05), which means that the more respondents agree with the view that others' values are accepted, the larger is the decrease in connection with the local community. Again, because of PRE property of gamma measure, we can conclude that knowing the level of others' values acceptance improves a perceived decrease in connection with the local community by 71.4%.

Conclusion

Our study assumed two main objectives: to investigate the respondents' attitude on whether the acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community affects cultural identity and to investigate the attitude on whether the others' cultural values that respondents adopt within a virtual community contribute to a decreased connection with the local community.

The media serve as a platform for building collective and personal identities that, due to the globalization process, are becoming uniform. Previous research confirmed the assumption that the acceptance of unknown persons online creates new opportunities for interaction and communication of people, facilitating the development of new social responsibilities (Ellison et al. 2014).

We conclude that our first hypothesis was confirmed because the results of the research demonstrated that there exists a connection between the attitudes about the acceptance of unknown persons within the virtual community and the attitudes about the change of cultural identity, and that this connection is moderate and positive. We established that the more respondents approved of other virtual network users' acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community, the stronger was their agreement with the attitude that online cultural identity is changing. Our second hypothesis was confirmed, as well, because the results demonstrated that the identity transformation resulting from the acceptance of others' cultural values leads to a decreased intensity of social relations among people in a local community (Singh 2010).

The second hypothesis was also confirmed because we established that there exists a link between the attitudes towards adopting others' cultural values and the attitudes towards a decreased connection with the local community, and that this connection is strong and positive. We concluded that the more the respondents agree with the attitude that participants in the virtual community accept others' cultural values, the stronger is their agreement with the attitude that the intensity of relations between people in the local community is decreasing.

Limitations and Future Research

Since the data used in this research was collected based on a convenience sample, the reader should be cautious in making generalizations. The authors would like

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to encourage other researchers to further investigate the dynamics of virtual communities with reference to the impact on cultural identity.

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The First Person

James Cargile

Abstract: Many languages have a first person singular subject pronoun ('I' in English). Fewer also have a first person singular object pronoun ('me' in English). The term 'I' is commonly used to refer to the person using the term. It has a variety of other uses. A normal person is able to refer to theirself and think about their self and this is of course an important feature of being a person. For any person x, no one other than x can possibly think about x and by that alone, qualify as thinking about theirself. Perhaps this is special. However, there is a strong tendency to conflate this important capacity with capacities of grammar, such as thinking first person thoughts or 'I thoughts.' This leads to attempts to establish necessary truths about persons on the basis of rules of grammar which are not logically necessary. Thinking about oneself does not logically require a first person linguistic capacity. This essay is criticizing various tendencies to overlook this.

Keywords: first, I, person, pronoun, singular, subject.

1. It is possible to look in a mirror and see someone other than yourself due to the angle of viewing. So it is possible to see a person in a mirror, knowing it is a mirror image and knowing you are seeing someone, without knowing whether it is you. Suppose A sees a person in a mirror, sees that the person is wounded, and judges "B is wounded" and is mistaken. It is not B. A's error was not about whether there was a wound. The error was in misidentifying the subject of his attribution of woundedness as B. In a second case, A thinks the person in the mirror is – himself. He thinks "That's me – I am wounded." A could be wrong. This could happen in two ways – the appearance of a nasty scrape is really some strawberry jam smeared on the reflected person's back – or the reflected person, the person A calls wounded, is not A.

In these cases, we have seen error due to attributing a property to something which does not in fact have that property. We have also seen error due to misidentifying the thing to which you attribute a property. The thing has the property – there is no error about that – but it is not the thing you *take it to be*. It may be B when you think it is you, or you, when you think it is B, etc. Some philosophers hold that when you think you are wounded, saying "I am wounded" you may misattribute being wounded, but you cannot possibly be mistaken due to misidentification. This is sometimes regarded as an important insight and named the phenomenon of "Immunity to Error through Misidentification" (IEM).

Suppose A thinks he is checking his back in a mirror to see if he is wounded. He is not in pain but may have scraped his back. He is in fact looking through a window. B is on the other side checking B's back. Each is craning his

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neck looking at a back, thinking it is their back when in fact it is the other's. B is wounded (has a bit of scrape) while A is not. A sees the scrape and thinks "I am wounded." I say this is an error due to misidentification. A is right about the woundedness but wrong about the subject. This is another case that seems to count against IEM.

2. It is a contingent fact about English that 'I' is the first person singular subject pronoun (fpssp) and 'me' is the first person singular object pronoun (fpsop). People who confuse the roles of 'I' and 'me' could come to be a usage-fixing majority. Some languages do not distinguish between the first person subject pronoun and the first person object pronoun, do not have our distinction between 'I' and 'me.' A speaker who ignores the distinction may be understood perfectly well and be speaking English. "'I' is the fpssp" needs to be explained in correcting such a speaker. It is doubtful that a philosophical explanation would help.

That the English language is not definable may be disputed by philosophers taking a formal system, perhaps an 'interpreted' one, as a paradigm of language. Such paradigms greatly facilitate the formulation of logically precise generalizations, but at the cost of ignoring how language is actually individuated (that is, vaguely). Versions of 'pidgin English' are not English, and subversion of the fpssp-fpsop distinction can be a step toward pidginization. But the assumption that it is a defining characteristic of English to have that distinction is a source of confusion about the function it serves. This is likely to be disputed. It is common to defend generalizations about English by ruling out counterexamples as not really English. This can make it impossible to achieve agreement. It may nonetheless be interesting to pursue.

3. Making it a criterion for a 'correct use' of 'I' that there is a person producing a token and the token refers to that producer, guarantees the doctrine of the automatic user-reference of correct uses of 'I.' A similar rule can be offered for 'me' and then the 'subject - object' distinction can be addressed. The resulting doctrine is a tautology that obscures facts about actual usage. That may be better than such a 'token reflexive rule' as that any token of 'I' refers to whoever produced it (I-yi-yi!). Trivial truth might seem preferable to trivial falsity. But the token reflexive rule is more useful for the purpose of teaching English, where simple rules of thumb that are right in common cases are better than tediously guarded trivialities. You may teach Mog that if he needs to deceive a subpoena server who calls at his door, "Mog is not here" will do, while "I am not here" will be disastrous.

That is because "everybody knows" the token reflexive rule, so the server would take Mog to be referring to himself with 'I' (at least initially, so as to find the remark difficult to make sense of), while there is no such rule for proper names. Whether Mog, in saying "Mog is not here" is referring to himself is unclear because "referring to himself" in the given case is unclear. He is not

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directing the attention of his audience to himself at the time. The server will naturally think the person speaking to him is referring to some other person (or, if he is suspicious, Mog’s performance will at least make straightforward sense as an effort at deception). But the server has means of determining who the person named ‘Mog’ is which could lead him to discover Mog’s deception. We can understand how the phrases “taking him to be referring to himself,” “referring to himself” and “knowing who Mog is” work in the description of possible sayings in this case. Stating logically true general rules about the working of these phrases can be more difficult, and there is a danger of founding the authority of such rules on stipulations which obscure the possible alternate uses.

4. If a society of English speakers has a child they regard as very special, they could name him ‘I.’ There could be another named ‘Me,’ etc. (The capitalization of ‘Me’ is an unnecessary concession to a dispensable convention about names. This community might deal only in speech.) I would learn to avoid using ‘I’ and might manage with skillful circumlocution or just use ‘me.’ Me could get by using ‘I.’ I, in spite of being extremely acute, could become confused, like any human. He might have an episode of thinking he is not I. Seeing himself in a big store mirror, he might point to himself and say “There is I, with terrible posture – thank goodness yours truly doesn’t slouch like that!” He mistakenly used ‘I’ to identify a member of the crowd as being someone other than himself, while correctly commenting on the posture. His hearers could understand this performance in terms of the speaker having lost track of who is named by a name which is in fact his own. It would be amusing but not at all incoherent.

I was not misusing ‘I,’ but he was not using ‘I’ as fpssp. What it is to so use ‘I’? Is there a logical criterion for such a use? Is there such a property as being a token of ‘I’? We may ask, is ‘i’ a token of ‘I’?, is ‘I’ a token of ‘i’? is ‘*i*’ a token of ‘i’? etc. It is interesting to try reading these questions aloud and deciding how to vocalize the symbols. I say there is such a property as being a (written) token of the 9th letter of the English alphabet and there is considerable variety in those tokens, capital, lower case, in various typescripts, or in handwriting of various shapes. It is a contingent fact that ‘I’ is a token of the 9th letter of the English alphabet, and contingent that if there is any token of ‘I’ it is a token of the 9th etc. It is not contingent that if there is any token of the 9th letter then it is a token of the 9th letter. What about the claim that any token of ‘I’ is a token of ‘I’? The question is dubious because “is a token of ‘I’” as it works in the question, does not have a clear meaning. (Would it be the same question with ‘i’?) And this is confining our attention just to written tokens. If a colloquial speaker we know well says in speech what we would say in reading aloud “‘I’ gives Al a lot of trouble” we can rule out the interpretation on which Al is struggling with the concept of fpssp. We may yet wonder whether Al needs an ophthalmologist, or whether the speaker, whom we know dislikes Al, is reporting harassing Al.

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5. Anyone can easily identify tokens of 'I' on a typical textbook page (as opposed to ingeniously contrived problem pages) if it is made clear that any token of the 9th letter will qualify. They will then ignore a number of differences and get the common property right. They can do as well for upper case tokens of a given type font, getting that different property right. People's ability to recognize written tokens that differ greatly in their geometric properties is quite striking. This has some connection with the ability to decipher a message, grasp what is said. Flying over a desert island, we may recognize a message stamped into the sand, knowing it is not just a coincidence of wind effect. Reading the message, we may identify a token of 'H.' If we are getting daily messages, the very same token could be left while those around it were erased and replaced, so that that same arrangement in the sand would now be a token of 'A.' (It might be seen as a typo (or stampo) – but it could be as 'directly' identified as the other letters.) This could inspire an attempt to distinguish between an object and various roles it can play. We will then encounter, on the way to the role of fpssp, the role, being a token of 'I.'

A large building may have 'I.B.M. CORPORATION' on its wall in large bronze letters, each separately attached to the wall. The letters are taken down and there is a bronze 'I' four feet tall and quite sturdy. It might come to be used for cutting weeds or as a digging tool, or as a capital Roman numeral one, or in an "I like Wheaties" sign or an ostentatious sign for an extravagant philosophy conference on the IEM problem, etc. If used long term as a large double T square by carpenters, would it be a token of 'I'? If money is riding on the answer, arbitration is needed, otherwise, why ask? Pick up anything (that you can lift). The question "What is this thing, exactly?" may make sense, but it can break down under philosophical pressure. The question can be understood from the perspective of different possible uses, or some other system of classification. Without such background, it can acquire a false aura of difficulty. We will leave the question "What is the word (not the letter or numeral) 'I'?" and take up "being the fpssp." Can we define this property which is commonly attributed to something, the word, or uses of it?

6. Compare the project of defining the roles of subject and predicate. There used to be such as "The subject is the word or group of words which denotes the thing or things of which the predicate is predicated." Such sayings can help students to learn to use grammatical classifications, but as attempts at philosophical definition they are unsatisfactory. There is the problem of grammatical subjects which do not refer, which can lead to debates about reference to nonexistent subjects, and there is a problem about circularity. One response is to choose a few paradigm sentences, perhaps on the grounds that the majority of competent speakers readily count them as 'sentences.' Then lists of words can be made and rules introduced for forming new sentences or compound words.

While the listing of things called 'sentences (words) of English' is based on empirical observation by social scientists, the use made of the lists is strongly

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analogous to the construction of a 'formal language.' 'Subject terms' or 'noun phrases' etc. are a list of expressions simply given those titles. Something will be, for example, a 'name' because it is listed as a name (or a name because listed under 'name'). After listing some instances of sentences, there will be formal rules for revising and making further sentences or compound names, etc. (Some such accounts of 'English' may even go so far as to include rules of inference or even axioms, so that the 'system' may have theorems or be pronounced inconsistent. However, it would be unfair to count such extremes as essential features of the attempts at formal accounts of English.)

'English' can thus be presented in a systematic way analogous to a formal language. This will not define the actual language, where it will always be possible for expressions to be recognized as sentences that are not counted by the system. They will be understood by users who count as speaking English. This does not happen for a mathematically defined formal system, but it is not only possible (thus necessarily possible), but likely for a natural language. (Ironically, exceptions to a recursive grammar may be inspired by publishing the grammar and inflaming some rebellious speakers.) Furthermore, these attempts to recursively specify the grammar of English will leave unanswered the natural questions as to what role the expressions in a given classification do serve. We will want something beyond the arbitrary designations. This is not to say nothing can be offered. The systematic arrangement and presentation of sentences as constructed may suggest valuable insights. They will not make actual English any more definable than a person is.

7. Explaining linguistic functions for English expressions in English is highly liable to circularity. It helps somewhat to imagine the explanations being addressed to a foreign speaker in their native language. We tell them that when you want to refer to yourself as subject of your statement, then you use the first person singular subject pronoun, and you can tell them this word is 'I.' That may be fine teaching. The student is not thereby prepared to deal with "My dog has fleas" versus "The dog I own has fleas," etc. but is being given a fair start. As a definition (fpssp use of 'I' in S iff use of 'I' in S to refer to producer of 'I') for even a very restricted simple sort of sentence S avoiding compound phrases, it would be both broad and narrow. You may refer to yourself using your name. We can clear that up somewhat, distinguishing "I am Smith" and "Smith is I," etc. Rules about matching verb patterns to subjects may be cited as definitive of English, but these are patterns which have changed in the history of the language and can always change. If we recognize that there are logically different kinds of self 'reference,' defining 'the' function of 'I' or of fpssp is liable to confront too many distinct kinds of reference. This can lead to resorting to stipulations which arbitrarily restrict uses that count as 'fpssp.'

Narrowness is just as bad. The explanation depends on the speaker or producer having the purpose of referring to theirself. Someone talking in their sleep might mutter "I have fleas" without having any intention of referring to

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themself, let alone revealing their embarrassing problem. Whether they are 'using' the words they mutters is cloudy. Furthermore, there may be no speaker or producer as agent. It is obvious that a token of such a sentence as (I): "I recommend that you sell your stock" could occur without 'I' having any referent. Those seven words could fall out from a pile onto the floor (or be blown against a Velcro wall, etc.) and produce such a token. In fact, in the token displayed in this paper, the 'I' does not refer (though 'I' is involved in naming the token[1]). That might be explained by appeal to the fact that the sentence is not being used, only mentioned as an example. That is, the sentence, as it occurs in this paper, is not being used, only mentioned. If I perversely went on to set up a use of that sentence in this paper, that could be dismissed by counting sentences and referring to the sentence as it occurs at the nth sentence place for the right n. Then there is a clear mentioner (me) and no user.

However, the sentence, as depicted in the story, has neither a user nor a mentioner, and not even a producer (unless some complex combination of gravity and wind, etc. gets counted). The 'I' is just as much the first person singular subject pronoun, whether or not (I) is being used. The explanation might be made subjunctive, in terms of what would be done if the sentence were actually used. If some token were used, then some would say that it is obvious that there must be a user, and the user is the referent of the token of 'I' that is used. It is worth discussing this appeal to the idea of 'using.'

In the story just presented, the token of 'I' occurs by coincidence. If the coincidence gets to the level of miraculous, things become unclear. If you are prayerfully agonizing over whether to sell your stock, having (I) fall out from a shelf of words might seem to be a message from above, with the referent of 'I' a matter for fearful speculation. This shows that it can be hard to determine whether a token of 'I' is being used. If the sentence "'I' is the fpssp" falls in place, it might tempt the verdict that a token of 'I' got mentioned by accident, raising the question as to who did the mentioning. It would be better to admit that it is neither used nor mentioned, in spite of being in quotation marks, which is a caution against taking quotation marks as a logical guarantee of mention.

8. These odd possibilities do not refute the claim that if the sentence (I) were used, and in such a way that the occurrence of 'I' qualified as first person singular subject pronoun, then it follows that the occurrence refers to the user. That leaves the question as to what it is to be a fpssp use. One attempt might be (U): being a first person singular subject pronoun use is, by definition of such a use, a use to refer to the user. Our earlier character I can use 'I' in such a way as to disprove (U).

'The user' also makes the following case relevant: Bill, is a floor worker in a large convention, who has an arrangement with a support crew. When he holds up a placard reading "I need more pamphlets," his crew brings another stack of

[1] But not the *word* 'I,' of course! We are being precise!

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pamphlets extolling his candidate, A. Another floor worker, Bob, has a similar arrangement with his support crew. When he holds up a placard reading "I need more pamphlets," they rush him a stack of pamphlets extolling his candidate, B. Things are intense in the huge convention and both Bill and Bob are running out of handouts at the same time. Poor Bob lost his placard when a group of drunken conventioneers grabbed it and cut it up to use as playing cards. Though working for opposing parties, Bill and Bob are themselves apolitical and buddies. Bill says, "Don't worry, Bob, we can both use this placard." Rather than take turns, they hold up the placard, one holding one end, the other the other. (Either grip is sufficient to support the placard.) Doesn't the 'I' on the placard make individuating reference both to Bill and to Bob? (Bob might have forgotten a supply of pamphlets stuffed in his shirt, so that his claim is false, while Bill's is true.)

A defender of (U) may hold that there are two uses, with Bob's use referring to Bob and Bill's to Bill. The fact that it was Bill who produced the token is irrelevant. Use outranks production here. This sort of defense of (U) is symptomatic of how deeply entrenched loose claims about the logical status of 'I' or fpssp are. We will persist in examining (U).

9. Here is a recognizable statement of a philosophical view: "It is a necessary condition of moral agency that the agent is capable of thinking I-thoughts." It is obvious that one asserting this is not using 'I' in that assertion to make a singular reference to the assertor. It still seems that they are using 'I' – and as fpssp. We can concede that they are making a self reference, as part of a general reference to all possible moral agents. This shows that using 'I' does not entail <u>individuating</u> reference. A defender of (U) may hold that this only shows this use of 'I' is not a first person singular subject pronoun use. That is an easy reply, but troubling. Shouldn't a 'Cartesian' (not Descartes) want to hold that anyone who thinks an I thought of the I think kind must then be correct in drawing an I exist conclusion (if they live long enough to draw it)? This is a general reference to I thinkers, yes, but the first person singular subject pronoun is used in making that reference. It is not plausible that the 'I' is not, in that use, the first person singular subject pronoun. That could be granted while denying that the use is a first person use, but this makes for confusing terminology. The Cartesian claim is not an individuating reference to the user who is making the claim. But the generalization is about all first person singular subject pronoun based thoughts. That is, about fpssp type thoughts in any language.

This is likely to draw complaints about use-mention confusion and the need for quotation marks. Such complaints are a symptom of the *hubris* arising from inflated estimates of the clarity of this distinction. Smith may say "When a thinker argues from the premise I think to the conclusion I am…." We respond "You mean the thinker you are discussing assumes that *you* (Smith) think and concludes that, that *you* am, er…are?" We mean to warn that the speaker should use quotes. But this conversation was not in writing! And even if it were, what do

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the quotes ensure? You may say that Smith did not mean to refer to himself but misspoke by failing to use quotation marks to signal he was not using the 'I.' This is close to the maneuver of reserving the right to class an occurrence of "I" as a use only if it squares with your generalization.

Of course there is a function of quotation, for which quotation marks are merely a tool that may help accomplish it. We mean the function of quoting, not a 'quotation function' for producing names of expressions, with a puzzle as to the nature of the arguments to the function and their names. Achieving the function of quoting cannot be guaranteed by quotation marks. Neither quotation marks nor any other purely formal linguistic devices can logically guarantee non-use in a natural language. If you reveal state secrets, putting your words in quotation marks does not make you less a traitor. Quotation marks do not make obscenities any less obscene[2], or ensure that you are not producing them for some bad reason.

10. Suppose your native language is a rare tribal language, utterly foreign. You are now in the U.S. and speak English flawlessly. An old friend from the tribe comes to visit, knowing no language but Tribal. He is extremely bright, though, and quick. At a party, he sees an attractive woman and wants a date. You explain to him that he should walk up, smile and say (i) "I am very attractive and you are eager to date me." You explain in Tribal that this is how you say, in English (ii) "You are very attractive and I am eager to date you." We may assume that in this case both (i) and (ii) are true in their ordinary English meaning and both contents are believed by your friend, of course, only in Tribal. Your friend is using the word 'I' to refer to the woman. It may be objected that no, he is misusing it, thus not using it.

On that line you could defend your client against a charge of using a firearm in the commission of a felony.[3] He wasn't using his gun, just misusing it. Not only was the use legally improper, his aim was terrible, etc. Or suppose your client did not know what a gun is, coming from an odd background. He is a genuine crook, though, and wanted to rob a bank. He snatched a gun from the holster of the bank guard because he thought it was a sort of club. He is huge and frighteningly strong, and when he waves this club people obey. He does this and walks out of the bank with a bag of money. Is he not guilty of armed robbery? Your client knowingly used the gun to get the money and your friend knowingly used 'I' to refer to someone else.

It is true that neither knew 'the proper use' of the tool they used. No doubt we do know, though liable to become annoyed if pestered for a precise general formula. The requirement that the user understands what the user is doing will

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[2] Consider, for example, the boast: "I will never, in my entire life, *use* even one single, 'fucking' obscenity!" Has the speaker merely mentioned the obscenity without using it?

[3] If this seems too absurd, see the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Smith vs. The United States, 508 U.S, 223 (1992).

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not help much. "Understanding or knowing what you are doing" makes straightforward sense in many natural uses, as in application to the case of the Tribal speaker, who did not know what he was doing. It breaks down badly under philosophical pressure. We are discussing the question: what function must an agent accomplish with a token of 'I' in order to qualify as making a proper fpssp use of 'I'? Requiring that the agent understand what function the agent is accomplishing with the token of 'I,' as a condition of qualifying as making a proper fpssp use of the token, does not show what function that is. If it adds a demand for a general account of understanding to the quest for a general account of the role of the fpssp or of 'I,' it is an unhelpful addition. The Tribal speaker could have been clued in on the prank by his friend and still gone through with it, pretending to be deceived by his friend while "knowing what he is doing." How should that count for his use of 'I'? Presuming there is a general answer is begging an important relevant question.

11. We have already reviewed cases for which it is not true that the proper use of 'I' is to refer to the speaker or writer. There is nothing improper about discussing I-thoughts in general, and without the ritual use of quotation marks. Perhaps those "I thought" cases can be set aside by restricting attention to the kind of sentences containing 'I,' that are 'relevantly similar' to our example (I). "I thought it was Monday" would be relevantly similar, while "Smith's last mental act was an I thought" would not be. Consider then, a computer designed to offer advice on stocks. Details can be important. One detail concerns whether the computer is solely concerned with stocks, or it is a large computer on which various programs can be run, and it is just running a stock evaluation program. At any rate, we plug in data about our stock, the machine whirrs, chugs or otherwise seems busy, and out comes a token of (I). Is this a case in which the computer is using the sentence (I) to offer advice and in doing so, using the pronoun 'I' to refer to the computer (or the app, etc.)?

Perhaps this depends on still further details. When in good working order, the machine dispenses excellent advice. But it is broken down, and when data is plugged in, it just prints out the last advice it offered back when it was working. Any data causes a print-out of (I). Something similar could happen to a person. A famous stock broker may be semi-comatose in a drug rehab program. We try to get a response from him by asking about our stock and he 'responds' with (I). We are encouraged until an attendant tells us that is all he ever says and he says it often, in response to casual greetings from the staff, etc. He is still a person, but is not <u>using</u> the sentence, even if, by some coincidence, his production of the sentence in some case might be misunderstood as a use, and turn out to be excellent advice.

Or the stockbroker could be in jail, and have a meeting with an assistant while under the watchful eye of a guard and the conversation closely recorded. He says (I) and by a secret code, conveys "Smith hid the investment money in a secret account numbered 0769A." He is using (I) and 'I' but not to refer to

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himself. The machine could do something like that. We can object that, while (I) may be used here, it is not used in accordance with established usage. Of course we want to follow the advice "Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use!" – but only for the use in accordance with the meaning.

Let us stay with the machine and assume it is working well and gives good stock advice by producing (I). What is it that gave the advice? 'The machine!' (or the app, etc. I ignore these variations). And what is the basis of its personal (or mechanical) identity? Is there something about it that qualifies it to use the special symbol 'I,' or is the special symbol getting used properly what underwrites the identity? Is the 'I' that says (I) the 'I' that says "I need oiling soon?" The machine might dodge that one by exploiting its ability to print out a large number of tokens at once, even speaking in volumes. It could produce a whole life history of 'I's, all at once and brush off the Sartrean question. We could wait for volume 2 and ask whether the 'I' that produced it is the 'I' that produced volume 1, but this does not have the bite of the original poser.

Some might argue that the machine is not like the 'I,' is not a substance, but a mere compound, divisible into parts, unlike the 'I' or self. 'Divisible' here is unclear. Dividing a machine into its parts can mean it is not presently in existence. It is disassembled. It may be possible to reassemble it, or not, like some machines that curious investigators have been unable to get back into operation. The indivisibility of the self or 'I' has been held to prove its immortality. That is highly questionable. The argument appeals to the premise that the self cannot even be divided in thought, making it essentially different from a mere machine. But merely attending, in thought, to various parts of a machine is not dividing it, even in thought, and imagining disassembling it is imagining suspending its existence. Some respectable thinkers presumed to think about the parts of a (the) soul. There would be debate as to whether the rational part could exist without the other parts.

12. Those can be confusing considerations, which might be avoided by rejecting the singular 'the machine' as mere linguistic convenience. Properly, there are the various parts and we should be speaking in the plural. We would say the parts are printing various tokens and use the resource of plural quantifiers to free ourselves, or their parts, from the illusion of the machine's self. But wait! It was 'the machine' that was the target, not the human self! We were only discussing exposing the production of 'I' talk by a machine as nothing qualifying as a genuine first person singular reference. Ruling that out on the grounds it is not genuine use trivializes the claim that genuine use entails such genuine reference.

13. Still, it is held that the 'I' as used by humans is associated with something special. Frege says, in translation,

> …everyone is presented to himself in a particular and primitive way in which he is presented to no one else. So, when Dr. Lauben thinks that he has been wounded, he will probably take as a basis this primitive way in which he is

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> presented to himself. And only Dr. Lauben can grasp thoughts determined in this way. (Frege, 298)

In translation, Frege implies that the way Dr. Lauben would think to himself that he has been wounded is by thinking "I have been wounded" (or a German translation). However, if he wants to let others know he has been wounded, he may still say "I have been wounded" (unless he is speaking to Germans), "but he must use the 'I' in a sense which can be grasped by others, perhaps in the sense of 'he who is speaking to you at this moment'…" (Frege, 298)

The idea that everyone is presented to himself in a particular and primitive way in which he is presented to no one else may be a worthy object of contemplation. It will not be discussed here, beyond noting that this 'way' is not clearly linguistic or a 'sense' of any linguistic expression. There may be a thing which is presented and a thing to which it is presented and possibly a thing which presents the one to the other. When deeply contemplating, say, a sunset, the sunset is present to you, rather than presented, and you are not presented in the object of contemplation. You may then think of the scene as being contemplated and still not need a linguistic expression to designate the contemplator. Yet Frege seems to connect this 'way' of your being presented with a special private 'sense' of 'I' (or 'ich') which can only be grasped by – who? The user. Is there a word which has the power to present you to yourself when you use it? Is the idea that 'I' has this power of presenting when it is 'used' by anyone? It can't be the word by itself, and use requires something to use.

Frege then asks whether the thought Dr. Lauben expresses to himself with "I have been wounded" could be the same thought he conveys to others with that sentence. That seems an idle question in view of Frege's preceding remarks. It is clearly stated that only Dr. Lauben can understand what he is saying to himself with the words "I have been wounded." To then try to locate this private sense would be absurd. Success by some person other than the good doctor would refute the claim that the sense is private to Dr. Lauben.

After a bombing, medics may check to see who needs help. Lauben might say "I have been wounded." It is plausible that he might have achieved the same result with "He who is speaking to you at this moment has been wounded." The medics might blame the odd style of speaking on the trauma. If Dr. Lauben, thinks, just to himself "He who is speaking to you at this moment has been wounded," he might need a special private sense for 'you,' or perhaps he could make do just with such a sense for 'he.' In appealing to the medics 'he' could be dropped for "the one who is speaking to you at this moment." But then, 'you' seems dispensable too. "The person speaking at this moment" ought to suffice for intelligent, well disposed medics. Couldn't it work for Lauben's private thoughts as well? The doctor would think to himself "The person whose thinking is present now has been wounded." But now, what is there to be private but the thinking? Not its content.

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When the medics hear "The person speaking at this moment has been wounded," it would be perverse to respond with "Speaking to whom?" They know well enough who is being addressed and who is addressing them. It is not profoundly different for Lauben's private inner thought. Suppose he is dazed and thinking out loud, unaware that highly perceptive and kind medics are hovering over him to see if he is alive. Lauben mutters "That bomb was terrible, but it seems that it did not kill all of us. At least one of us has survived, alive though injured. The one of us who is thinking this thought is an example." The medics hear this and understand. It would be empty and arbitrary to insist they are getting a different thought than a private one understandable only by Lauben. That the thought might well have been unheard is no basis for crediting it with a necessarily private sense. Lauben might have stayed with the first person plural. "Our group has sustained some injuries to its members…" You might as well hold that a group is presented to itself in a particular and primitive way in which it is not presented to outsiders.

14. Thomas Nagel has discussed the view that "The quest for the self, for a substance which <u>is</u> me and whose possession of a psychological attribute will <u>be</u> its being mine, is a quest for something that could not exist." (Nagel, 355) He describes the view as based on the argument that he could

> describe without token-reflexives the entire world and everything that is happening in it – and this will include a description of Thomas Nagel and what he is thinking and feeling [and yet] there seems to remain one fact which has not been expressed, and that is the fact that I am Thomas Nagel. This is not, of course, the fact ordinarily conveyed by those words, when they are used to inform someone else who the speaker is – for that could easily be expressed otherwise. It is rather the fact that I am the subject of these experiences… (Nagel, 355)[4]

It is impossible to determine in a general way, what would be required for anyone, me or others, to qualify as knowing who I am, without an account of what is involved in knowing who I am. And that is not a promising project, since everyone is an indefinite variety of things, and knowing who you are is an evaluative notion which allows such as "I had not yet realized who I really am," "We thought we knew you!" etc. If I were to embark on giving you an interminable description of the entire world there are likely views you might adopt about who I am, not to mention what (and a similar attitude might occur to me in my private thought, that perhaps it is time to stop), but the possibility of my surprising you, or myself, would always remain. That does not license the conclusion that I could not let you know who I am, with or without token

[4] Nagel cited Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* 5.64, which includes "The I in solipsism shrinks to an extensionless point…" That is use of 'I' without quotes. The original German is "Das Ich des…" Usually 'ich' is not capitalized. This usage no doubt means something. 5.641 includes "The philosophical I is not the man, not the human body or the human soul of which psychology treats, but the metaphysical subject, the limit, not a part of the world." Is that use of fpssp?

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reflexives. A better lesson is that "who I am" is at least as open as "what I have done or may be able to do." Even what I have done is necessarily open to revision by historians. (We might call it a 'judgment call,' keeping in mind Judgment Day, when of course, it will finally be gotten right.)

15. Anything that can be said at all can be said unclearly. An important example is the point that anything that one can say to oneself can be said to someone else. This point is obscured by a variety of considerations. There is Robinson Crusoe and related types. There is Einstein stranded on a big island (make it Manhattan) of simple natives, trying to explain to them about relativity. But some philosophers also think there is the private inner states of a person, which are accessible only to the person and include items which may be identified by subject terms or described by predicate terms comprehensible only to the person. They are encouraged by the point that there may in fact be no one available who can understand you, other than your self. We could reply that, for every thing one can say to oneself, it is logically possible that there should be a distinct person to whom that thing could be said and that this is essential to what it is to be a saying. That is sadly lacking in punch. Better to say that, if you can say something to yourself, you can say it to someone else. When tempted to say "Only I can understand this thought" it is well to bear in mind that everybody can understand that sentiment and consider also that the sentiment not only does not require the implied thought, but is reason to suspect there is none.

16. This is not to deny (or affirm) that there are private experiences. Essential privacy is another matter. Here is a perfectly possible case. A large military base has a bad problem with malingering. A standard complaint is severe migraine attacks requiring the day off. In desperation, authorities turn to a remarkable psychic. When he palpitates the skull of someone suffering a headache, a duplicate of the pain (or the pain, if you prefer) travels up the psychic's arm to his head, where the headache is exactly duplicated (or briefly resides). Of course philosophers jostle about this, but the man can produce at a level that makes these skeptics purely academic. Testing on honest people with no motive for deception, the psychic unfailingly spots the headache sufferers and unerringly tells whether the pain is localized and if so, where it is, etc. Turned loose on the soldiers, his authority is quickly established. Soon very few soldiers try to fake a headache.

Our man is then loaned out to an even larger base. There are so many claiming headaches that the psychic is set up in an easy chair on a four foot high stand. He just reaches over and feels each head as the line of candidates files slowly by. After a long day, the weary psychic is feeling an odd, leathery, bald head. He says "This man has no problem…but wait… he is in fact beginning to develop a headache. It is coming on fast and getting worse and worse! Wow! What a doozy! Thank goodness I don't have this headache! This man clearly deserves time off!" As it turns out, an office wag is holding up a soccer ball. The

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psychic realizes to his dismay that this headache is in fact his own. He has mistakenly identified himself as someone who does not have a headache.

It will surely be objected that, every time the psychic feels a headache, he has that headache – so the psychic is making a conceptual mistake in speaking as he does. There could be a call for careful study of the logic of the relations "subject x has headache y" and "subject x feels headache y" and related locutions. There is a risk that 'results' of this study will be protected by stipulations, perhaps disguised as logical facts. Or it might just be insisted that it is impossible to feel someone else's pain (perhaps 'literally'). Every pain you feel is thereby privatized. No sense can be made of the idea of a pain getting loose and running through a large crowd, etc. There would always be an alternative way of describing the phenomenon which would preserve the right theories.

The truth is, that even if your pain is ever so private, if you are able to say what it is like, you can say it to other people, and this includes saying who it belongs to. You may insist that feeling is a kind of thinking – very well – but even that is not enough to make it a kind of speaking. Being in pain of course does not entail saying anything. But saying anything about anything entails being accessible to an audience. You may indeed have a feeling, and be unable to say what it is like, while there is, nonetheless, what it is like, what kind of feeling it is. But any feeling, like anything whatever, will be of many kinds. Any kind that can be understood and identified by one person can be understood and identified by others, and identified to others and also misidentified and misunderstood, by one and all.

17. There is a genuine logical distinction between first, second and third person reference. How these distinctions are conventionally marked in our language is a matter of contingent facts that are not essentially tied to the distinctions. Consider a case in which 100 highly intelligent people, each speaking a different language, are stranded on a tropical island. No one can understand any other's language. They can recognize that one of them is a doctor and two are nurses, and that those three have vital medical equipment and skills. There is a storm, with stuff flying around. Wounds are serious because of danger of infection. One person, A, pulls up his shirt and points to a cut across his abdomen, thus informing B that A has been wounded. B turns to signal for help and A notices that B has a cut on his back. A whistles to B and points to B's back and shows concern, conveying to B that B's back is wounded. A then points to C, that is, points out C to B. C is busy with something else and is not watching A. A points to a wound on C's back which C has not noticed.

A has drawn attention to wounds of A, B and C in performances that are first, second and third person in character. This is a matter of the way the references are presented to the audience and the vantage point of the audience and not of the way any words have been used. A would have said "I am wounded, you are wounded and she is wounded" if he had been talking to English speakers, but he did not need words. (The third person performance would not have been

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distinguishable from the second person performance if C had been in the audience.)

In setting out a formal system, one can define a symbol, as a symbol of that system, as associated with some logical notion, say material implication. It will be true by definition of that system that that symbol is for material implication. This does not restrict the possible use of that symbol absolutely, but only as it functions as a symbol of that formal system. In natural language, there is never such restriction on the use of a symbol as a symbol of the language, but only as a symbol in some dialogue, which may involve varying numbers of people. A term in a dialogue, say, a mathematical one, can have a definition, as a term of that dialogue. As a term of a natural language, it can have a lexical definition, that is, a list of things it is commonly used to mean, but not a logical definition – as a term of English. That is, having that definition is not essential to its being a term of English. This contingency of facts about use is an essential feature of natural language. There may be something special about some cases of one's access to oneself in thought or speech and a word may be very useful in achieving such access. If we want to discover some conceptual truth about this sort of access it will be poor procedure to try to formulate results in terms of facts about words.

18. In discussion about the nature of persons, one idea advanced is that a person is a being capable of thinking first person thoughts. This is not relying on 'I,' and it may not be relying on a grammatical category. The above example of A,B and C and the island injuries should suffice to make sense of a first person thought, A's, that he is wounded, which does not require any language statement in the first person. This may be opposed on the grounds that A's message was a way of saying "I am injured." Consider then, one last try against this language obsession. We have another island group, all English speakers, and they evolve into a version of English with no personal pronouns. They just use names. Smith says "Smith is wounded" and when she falls in love with the nurse, she tells the nurse "Smith loves Jones" and the nurse replies "Jones loves Smith too."

This linguistic community can get along with no first person sentences in their collective vocabulary. There will be loss of some convenience requiring extra work in clarifying some thoughts. But clarification is always likely to be required in any language. If this community nonetheless gets credited with first person thoughts, that is fine. The idea of defining a person as a being capable of first person thoughts is liable to circularity, especially if 'capable' is taken as loosely as it should be. There are severely handicapped persons for whom the capacity to think first person thoughts can only be restored or bestowed by God. The circularity of the definition might be dodged by confusing the capacity for first person thought with the ability to make correct use of the English word 'I.' We are not talking about a function which is essentially linguistic, though it is contingently expressed in most language by having a special grammatical category.

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Nothing said here is meant to disparage inner meditation on the soul and its hopes of eternal life. On the contrary, such valuable reflection is facilitated by being kept clear from the idolatry of grammar worship.

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Ersatz Belief and Real Belief

Jerome Gellman

Abstract: Philosophers have given much attention to belief and knowledge. Here I introduce an epistemic category close to but different from belief, that I call 'ersatz' belief. Recognition of this category refines our catalogue of epistemic attitudes in an important way.

Keywords: acceptance, William Alston, belief, ersatz belief.

I

The anonymous medieval Jewish Text, *Sefer Hachinuch* (The Book of Education) pronounces the principle that "One's heart follows after one's actions":

> From the actions that we perform the matter is fixed in our soul for ever. [For] a person's heart and all of his thoughts follow his actions, whether good or bad…. *for one's heart follows after one's actions.* (*Sefer Hachinuch* 1978)

According to this text, consistently repeated actions of a requisite type are apt for bringing about a stable change in one's thoughts and character.

Famously, Pascal applied just such a principle to acquiring a belief when he gave this advice following his argument for 'Pascal's Wager':

> Endeavour, then, to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness. (Pascal 1941)

Here Pascal, speaking to the reader, advises him to "convince yourself" by undertaking such activity that will "naturally make you believe." I take Pascal to be saying that belief in God will be produced by repeatedly performing, with persistence, certain relevant prescribed actions. Act 'as if' you believe and that has a good chance, in a natural way, of getting you *to* believe.

We may ask, though, whether Pascal's recipe for acquiring belief in God will yield belief or only what *looks* like belief in God, but really isn't. I can even think of a reason for saying that the result of using Pascal's recipe will not be real belief, an argument due to Bernard Williams (Williams 1973). Here it is. Presumably a person would know that she had gotten to the present result by way of what we might call Pascal's 'behavioral programming,' rather than by

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being convinced, say, by evidence for God's existence or by simply finding herself with a sustained conviction that God existed. Normally, that person would subsequently remember that she had acquired the belief in just that programmed way. But then she could hardly actually believe that the proposition in question was *true*, knowing that she had it only because she had simply *chosen* to have it. She would know she believes it "whether or not it is true." So she could hardly think of her state as belief.

Now, I have argued elsewhere against Williams' argument as applying to all cases of self-induced belief. I will not go into that here. However, Williams does raise questions about a Pascalian would-be believer. He might, that is, not *really* believe that God exists, since presumably knowing that whatever psychological state he has achieved has been achieved only by behavioral programming which he voluntarily undertook for just that purpose. He may have a reason to *want* to believe – Pascal's wager – but have no reason to believe that when he gets the belief it will be true. So, maybe what will seem to him to be a belief in God will be something else masquerading as belief, close enough to the genuine article to allow for a mistake or even self-deception, but not a real belief in God's existence.

But maybe we should think differently about this. Pascal's would-be believer is positively eager to acquire a belief that God exists, because he has been convinced by Pascal's bet. So, maybe he will be primed to *really* believe that God exists, the behavioral programming notwithstanding.

So, instead, consider the following passage from George Elliot's *Daniel Deronda.* In it, Daniel Deronda's mother is explaining to him why, as a young woman, she fled from her austere Jewish religious upbringing and kept secret from him his Jewish roots. She says of her father:

> He never comprehended me, or if he did, he only thought of fettering me into obedience. I was to be what he called 'the Jewish woman' under pain of his curse. I was to feel everything I did not feel, and believe everything I did not believe. I was to feel awe for the bit of parchment in the *mezuza* [scriptural passages] over the door; to dread lest a bit of butter should touch a bit of meat; to think it beautiful that men should bind the *tephillin* [ritual phylacteries] on them, and women not, – to adore the wisdom of such laws, however silly they might seem to me. I was to love the long prayers in the ugly synagogue, and the howling, and the gabbling, and the dreadful fasts, and the tiresome feasts, and my father's endless discoursing about our people, which was a thunder without meaning in my ears. I was to care forever about what Israel had been; and I did not care at all. I cared for the wide world, and all that I could represent in it. I hated living under the shadow of my father's strictness. Teaching, teaching for everlasting – "this you must be," "that you must not be" – pressed on me like a frame that got tighter and tighter as I grew. I wanted to live a large life, with freedom to do what every one else did, and be carried along in a great current, not obliged to care. You are glad to have been born a Jew. You say so. That is because you have not been brought up as a Jew. That separateness seems sweet to you because I saved you from it.

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Here is a woman who, from an early age, resisted behavioral programming into Jewish religious belief and practice. But, suppose that at some point, after thinking it all silly and stiffly resisting, she tires of the effort and decides to yield, and just lets her father manipulate her to become what he had wanted her to become – 'a Jewish woman,' as he defined it. And suppose she thus developed away from thinking it all silly into what *looked* like belief. Here, it would be in order, perhaps more than in the Pascal case, to wonder whether she *really* would have believed in such a case, rather than merely seemed to believe, having gotten an ersatz belief rather than a 'real' one. And the reason why we should wonder more here than in the Pascal case is that Daniel's mother would have had a first order desire *not* to believe, competing with a higher order decision to override that and yield to her father's regimen. In Pascal's case we assume that the would-be believer has a first-order desire to believe, which then might just push him over the top to become a believer indeed. So in the case of Deronda's mother we would have a better reason to suspect the non-genuineness of belief.

The questions I have been asking of cases from Pascal and Elliot are generalizable to the theory of cognitive dissonance and its subsequent refinements. Dissonance theory was invented by Leon Festinger in the 1950's, and has undergone a series of refinements and corrections (Festinger 1957, 1964). While the scope of the theory has been controversial in psychology, it is often agreed that dissonance theory, with needed refinements, applies to at least a significant subset of types of cases. It is these that interest me here.

Festinger's thesis applies when a person holds 'psychologically inconsistent' cognitions (beliefs or claims to knowledge). Festinger claimed that awareness of such inconsistency would produce an anxiety of dissonance in subjects, causing them to change at least one of the cognitions to reduce the dissonance. He elaborated a theory about how cognitions would be revised and why, which I will not go into here. The classic example of the application of dissonance theory is to a person who smokes cigarettes habitually and who has come to believe that cigarette smoking causes cancer. The dissonance is between her awareness (1) that she smokes heavily, (2) that this will most likely cause her to have cancer, and (3) that she wishes to avoid getting cancer. Festinger predicts that if such a person finds it too difficult to stop smoking, she will reduce dissonance by revising her belief that smoking causes cancer, or otherwise will neutralize that belief. So, she will talk herself into believing that the research on the link to cancer was not conclusive, or that she was relevantly different from the subjects upon whom research had been conducted, or etc.

Subsequent to Festinger's work, Elliot Aronson introduced an important refinement emphasizing one's self-image as especially mediating the creation of psychological dissonance (Aronson 1968, 1997). Thus, if one had a perception of oneself as "having to be stupid" to do a certain action, yet did that action, one would be expected to revise one's attitude toward the action to bring one's having done the action into alignment with a stable, positive self image.

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One form of cognitive dissonance well studied exists when a person engages in an activity thinking initially that the activity is not worth doing. In certain circumstances and for certain types of people at least, this will cause a reevaluation of the activity as something valuable and worthwhile. Thus, in one type of study subjects are asked to engage in an activity that has in their eyes little or no intrinsic worth. If given a large amount of money as reward, afterwards the subjects are likely to be found not to have changed their minds about the intrinsic unworthiness of the task. If given only a negligible reward, however, subjects (who have agreed to do the task anyway) are found to a statistically significant degree to have changed their minds to now think the task to have been intrinsically meaningful, interesting, or worthy. The explanation of dissonance theory: Those receiving large rewards see the activity as worthwhile on account of the monetary reward they receive. They have no reason to change their estimation of the low intrinsic value of what they did in order to explain to themselves why they did an otherwise meaningless task. Those receiving meager reward, however, are faced with having done an activity that holds little, or no, or negative value for them. Why in the world, then, should they, smart, with-it people, have done it? To reduce the dissonance, they change their belief, now believing the task to have been a most worthwhile one. And *that's* the reason they did it.

My purpose in citing these studies is not to completely endorse their findings. Indeed researchers have challenged them on methodological grounds, and on grounds of individual differences among subjects when reacting to dissonant situations. Even after refinements were made in methodology, these studies were not unanimously accepted in the profession. Rather, my interest is to point out, what is generally agreed, that 'belief-changes' as a way of dealing with dissonance can and do occur, even if not on the scale or with the predictability of dissonance theory.

Now I can broaden my earlier questions: Might the result of cognitive adjustment when in dissonance be ersatz belief rather than belief, real belief? Might one not be misled into thinking he now suddenly believed, or self-deceptively think that? Consider the Pascalian would-be believer. He engages consistently over time in behavior for which he lacks the belief or evidence that it is tied to truth or is worthy of engaging in. Cognitive dissonance theory predicts that at least some of the time Pascal's advice will produce a change in cognition purely from a desire to diminish the dissonance between what one believes and what one is doing on a regular basis. But, after all, what results might not be belief at all, just ersatz belief.

II

By *ersatz belief* I do not mean feigned belief or ambiguous belief. By an ersatz belief that p I mean what has the capacity to fool one, even the subject himself, into thinking that he believes that p. Here's the idea. Let 'B' represent the facts

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about a subject upon which we – including a subject – base a judgment that a subject has a belief. Think of B as being the positive 'belief-making characteristics.' As we shall see, philosophers differ over what goes into B, so let's hold off on saying just what B includes, while noting that B will include facts about a subject garnered from introspection, observation, and theory. Here is the notion of ersatz belief:

> S has an *ersatz belief* that p at t iff (1) S has B unambiguously at t and (2) there is a fact, F, about S at t such that F subverts S's having B at t.

Where:

> S has B unambiguously at t iff There is no basis for doubting or hesitating in ascribing *having-B-at-t* to S.

And where:

> A fact F *subverts* S's having B at t when (1) S has B unambiguously at t, (2) F is true of S at t, and (3) F shows that S does not have the belief that p at t.

I call B 'positive,' in contrast to F, which is 'negative,' in that B provides the reasons for thinking that belief is present, whereas F shows that belief is absent. In order for this to be coherent, *the absence of F* cannot be in B. Otherwise no belief could be subverted, for subversion requires that B be present and that F be present. If B were to include the absence of F, then subversion would entail that F was both present and absent. I hereby ban *the absence of F* from B on the grounds that F is to be such that the question of its presence does not arise when making a judgment that belief is present. (Nonetheless, F's absence does arise when judging that a belief is subverted.) So F's absence is not in B. We could compare F's subverting a belief's existence to the claim that the workings of a Cartesian demon subvert the truth of belief in physical objects. This does not require thinking that human beliefs in physical objects are accompanied by the conviction that there is *no* Cartesian demon.

A person could be fooled into thinking that S (he himself or someone else) had a real belief that p at t when it was only an ersatz belief because that person could determine that S had B unambiguously at t, yet have no reason to think that there were facts subverting S having B at t. So we get situations, for example, where an ascriber (the subject or others) of belief to S at t later becomes aware of facts about S, as a result of which the ascriber comes to realize that S did *not* have a belief that p at t at all, despite B's presence at t. Indeed, no matter how long S had the components of belief that p, in ersatz belief an ascriber could come to realize that S *never* believed that p.

We should all be familiar with ordinary discourse which recognizes ersatz belief. However, I do not claim that every belief has an ersatz counterpart. For some beliefs it might not make much sense to entertain the existence of its ersatz opposite number. As Tom Flint remarked to me about the place he has worked for a few decades, "I can't imagine ever coming to realize that I never believed in

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the existence of Morris Hall." So I am not saying that for just every belief there exists its ersatz counterpart. To take an extreme example, you might be inclined to ascribe to your fish the belief that they were getting food when you sprinkled little worms into their water. Yet, you might have no idea what it would be like to discover that your fish never *really* believed they were getting food even though they always swam like mad toward the worms. Yet, there is no doubt that there are many beliefs for which there can intelligibly be an ersatz counterpart.

We are generally interested in whether a belief is real or ersatz only when the belief is of some momentousness. I am not moved to ask whether my belief that the Chinese eat dogs is a real or only a mock belief. Such an issue can and does arise when having a genuine belief is important to a subject or ascriber. A good example of this is in the religious life. For example, we can understand how one could recognize all of the components of B being possessed by a person and also think that only God knows whether that person really has the appropriate religious belief. And that is because one could realize that there were facts about the person that only God would know. And among these facts might be some that subvert what otherwise appears to be genuine belief. And we can understand how someone could truly say, "For a long time I thought I was an atheist (i.e., believed that I believed that God does not exist), but now in retrospect I realize that I was never an atheist (i.e. I never believed that God does not exist)." And that is because we can imagine a person discovering something about herself that shows that what she had was not a real belief that God did not exist, although it had all of the marks of belief.

Human beings have ersatz beliefs, but not animals. One necessary condition for a subject being able to have ersatz beliefs is that the subject possesses a sense of self. However, merely a sense of selfhood is not enough. There is good evidence for a sense of selfhood in orangutans, gorillas, (some) chimpanzees, and bonobos, and in bottlenose dolphins, as well as in elephants. (For primates see Gallup, 1987 and Gallup et al. 1995. For dolphins see Reiss and Marino 2001, and for elephants see Rizzolatti et al. 2006.) This is evidenced by self-conscious behavior of such animals in front of mirrors when they discover a mark on their body. It is also evidenced in some non-human primates whose deceptive behavior involves a projection of how they will be perceived by others (Mitchell 1991). Yet, it is doubtful that such animals can have ersatz beliefs. What more is required is a sense of self as a totality over time, a totality for which one can provide a coherent or nearly coherent *narrative*. What is required is a robust sense of self which takes in one's entire life (or great portions thereof) as telling what or whom one is, that is, the kind of self that can 'live toward death,' in Heidegger's terminology. And the reason such a sense of self is needed is that only by reference to such a self can what are otherwise the components of belief be subverted, as defined above. For only when given such a robust sense of self, can we say that *you* – the overarching coherent self considered in its entirety –

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never *really* believed what you seemed to believe as evidenced by the presence of the 'components' of belief.

The question whether a *person* believes that p or has only an ersatz belief will be the question whether the overarching self, considered overall and as integrated into a whole, should be considered to believe that p.

To illustrate, consider 'Hickey' in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*. Hickey has killed his wife. He tells himself and others that he killed his wife because he loved her so much. He tells himself that he was a lout to her, treating her appallingly, yet she forgave him his every sin. He felt great guilt for the way he mistreated her, so continuing to live with her was simply not an option. Leaving her was also not an option, for she loved him so much she would be miserable without him. The only solution was to kill her, because he loved her so much. So, Hickey told himself and others. The reader, though, sees between the lines that Hickey really hated his wife. That's why he killed her.

In the play, Hickey never admits his hatred for his wife. But suppose O'Neill were to have written a sequel, in which Hickey comes to realize not only that all along he hated his wife but also that he never *really* believed that the reason he killed his wife was because he loved her. He now sees that he was not capable of acknowledging his hate for his wife and that being the reason for killing her. He now admits that he hated her for always forgiving him and he hated her for making a doormat of herself. He now sees clearly that he couldn't ever have believed that the reason for killing his wife was his love for her. That was just too preposterous for him, the person who he is, Hickey, to have ever believed that! He now acknowledges that he never *really* believed that he killed his wife because he loved her. Note how this subverting of Hickey's belief depends on the use of a narrative about the self that judges what that self is capable of and what its true feelings are. This illustrates the kind of robust sense of self that makes ersatz belief possible.

III

Philosophers are notoriously divided over accounts they give of belief. The five main categories of theories are what I will call the 'feeling theory,' the 'behavior theory,' the 'mixed feeling-behavior theory,' the 'internal representation theory,' and 'functionalism.' None of these theories about belief succeed in preserving the distinction that exists between real and ersatz belief. Hence, none of these theories gives an adequate account of all belief. Alternatively, none of them account for all senses or all uses of 'belief.' This is not necessarily an objection to each of the proposals about belief, since it is not always clear whether a proposal means to capture the notion of belief in 'folk psychology' or is meant to clean up folk psychology for more 'serious' business, like science. Nonetheless, let's look at some of these proposals to see the failure to capture our distinction.

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The Feeling Theory

L. Jonathan Cohen provides the following characterization of 'belief,' as very often and 'perhaps standardly' used in ordinary discourse:

> Belief that p is a disposition, when one is attending to issues raised, or items referred to, by the proposition that p, normally to feel that p and false that not-p, whether or not one is willing to act, speak, or reason accordingly. (Cohen 1989, 1992)

To the disposition to "act, speak, or reason accordingly" Cohen assigns the name 'acceptance.' So belief is a disposition to feel that p is true and not-p false, irrespective of dispositions to act, speak, or reason on the basis of p. (Hereafter I will condense the feeling to: feeling that p is true.) How do I discover that I believe that p? Cohen's answer: By introspecting whether I am normally disposed to have the relevant feeling in the relevant circumstances. Others, I suppose, would come to think that I believe that p by inferring that from my behavior, acting in ways that show what inner feelings I have, though these might not be the very same behavior indicating what Cohen calls 'acceptance.'

Some will have a problem with Cohen's dividing off behavioral dispositions from belief, being convinced that such dispositions are of the very stuff of belief. I ask them please to play along with the idea that behavioral dispositions are separate from belief, to allow me to make my point about the fate of ersatz belief on Cohen's analysis. Playing along, then, there is still an immediate problem with Cohen's proposal. We should be familiar with the locution, "I have a feeling that p is true but I do not believe it." This does not have an inconsistent ring to it. Likewise, there does not seem to be an inconsistency in my saying, "I may have a disposition to feel that p is true, but I don't believe it." If so, we ought not to identify belief simply with "feeling that p is true." We can preserve Cohen's account by recognizing a distinct 'belief-feeling,' just that kind of feeling, or feelings, we have when we believe something occurently. We would not, of course, explain what a 'belief-feeling' is in terms of belief, but rather ostensibly, "It is *that* feeling," or in some other way that would not employ the term 'belief.' Then, I would have evidence that I believe that p when I have evidence that I am normally disposed to have *that* feeling in the appropriate circumstances.

The Feeling Theory cannot abide the possibility of ersatz belief. For in ersatz belief a person could have a tendency to have a belief-feeling that p, alright, and she could also think she has the belief that p, but she might not have a *real* belief that p because there are, for example, facts about her which she (or others) is not aware of, which are such that were she (or others) to discover them she (or others) would then realize *that she had not believed that p.*

This is a possibility not accountable for on the feeling theory of belief. The moral of the story is that not all belief that p can be merely a disposition to have a belief-feeling that p. The belief-feeling disposition must also be *secure*, meaning

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that there cannot be any facts about the person at the time of having the belief-feeling disposition that p, which if discovered would show that the person did not at that time believe that p. In ersatz belief, belief-feeling tendencies would be insecure in precisely this way.

Neither would there be a different sort of belief-mimicking on Cohen's account of belief, a mimicking deceiving people, including a subject, into thinking a subject has a genuine belief. To mimic belief that p would be to mimic a tendency to have a belief-feeling concerning p. There are two possibilities: (a) a mimicking of the tendency, (b) a mimicking of the feeling. I will assume that anything that mimics a tendency is itself a tendency, so will discount (a). On (b), we would have a counterfeit belief-feeling. It would be unlike the belief feeling but similar enough to it for it to deceive people, or to allow people to deceive themselves, that they have a genuine belief. On (b) we do get a conceptual distinction between belief – real belief – and what mimics belief. I doubt, though, that the distinction applies in practice. Are we familiar with two quite similar, though different, feelings, one a belief-feeling and the other not a belief-feeling but deceptively like it? I doubt that is the case. So there seems to be no sense in which a good account of a mimic of belief could be made out on Cohen's Feeling Theory.

The Behavior Theory

I cannot deal with every version of behavior theory, so I will choose just one with the claim that what I say about it and ersatz belief applies just as well to other versions. I take Ruth Barcan Marcus as my representative. She puts forward the following account of belief:

> (RBM) X believes that S just in case under certain *agent-centered circumstances* including x's desires and needs as well as *external circumstances*, x is disposed to act as if S, that actual or non-actual state of affairs, obtains. (Barcan Marcus 1990)

The idea is that we can capture a fact about a person's or an animal's behavioral dispositions by talking about beliefs. A belief is a disposition to *act* a certain way, which the speaker (who might also be the subject) identifies as acting as if a certain state of affairs exists. The switch from propositions to states of affairs is intended to facilitate ascribing beliefs to animals who can be expected not to have propositional attitudes. So an animal can behave as though a certain state of affairs obtains without formulating to itself a proposition recording that state of affairs. Talk about 'belief,' then, turns out to be just convenient shorthand for talking about behavioral dispositions.

There is an immediate problem with RBM. It is difficult to see how we can understand what it is to act *as if* S obtains without invoking belief.[1] Consider this.

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[1] In light of what I write below this is inaccurate. What is correct is that we cannot say what it is to act as if S obtains without invoking belief *or* acceptance. However, if we countenance the

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Suppose for the longest time Sam has had a 'desire' and a 'need' to kiss Sally. He decides that the next time he sees Sally he is going to just go up to her and give her a big kiss on the cheek. Sam is walking in the street and Sally is coming toward him. He approaches her and gives her a big kiss on the cheek. Given his desires and needs, and given that this is Sally, and that Sam is kissing Sally, it should follow, on RBM, that Sam believes that the state of affairs: *This is Sally*, obtains. Is this right? No. Because actually Sam *believed* that the person coming toward him was Shirley, his sister who he has not seen in years. He kissed Sally because he *believed* it was Shirley, being overcome with emotion at seeing her after such a long time. So, it is false that Sam believed he was kissing Sally, even though he had a disposition to kiss Sally and acted 'as if' he was kissing Sally.

Now, you might object that my example does not work because I have focused too finely on the moment that Sam kisses Sally. If we allowed in behavioral dispositions prior to and following the kissing episode things would be different. (For example, Sam might have "There is Sally. I will kiss Sally.") While I do not think this will suffice to defend the behavior theory, I propose to avoid further discussion by stipulating in my example that prior to and during the kissing episode Sam has no relevant behavioral dispositions other than for kissing Sally (so, for example, has no relevant verbal dispositions.) And immediately following the episode Sam suffers total and irrevocable amnesia with regard to the episode. So, by hypothesis, we are dealing with a specific, very limited disposition. What constitutes Sam's belief that he was kissing Sally is not a behavioral disposition but Sam's *thinking* that it was Sally he was kissing.

This illustrates the difficulty of giving an account of belief in terms of RBM. In the above case it is hard to see, given Sam's desires and needs concerning both Sally and Shirley, how we could distinguish between Sam believing he was kissing Sally rather than Shirley. The problem is being able to say what it is "to act as if S obtains" without recourse to x's beliefs in addition to x's desires and needs.

Another problem here is that RBM might not be able to distinguish between my momentarily believing *that this is a chair* and my momentarily believing the conjunction *this is a chair and 2+2=4.* For supposing I believe that 2+2=4, then my now at this very moment having a disposition to act as if *this is a chair* might not be distinguishable from my having a disposition to act as if *this is a chair and 2+2=4*. That is because it might be that at the moment I believe *that this is a chair* I also am such that I have a disposition to answer 'yes' if you ask me if 2+2=4. Yet, we do recognize a difference between the two beliefs. Furthermore, a person who believes that 2+2=4 and also believes that this is a chair does not

category of acceptance we will have a most difficult time distinguishing between belief and acceptance on purely behavioral grounds. So we get a dilemma for the present view: if we do not countenance acceptance, then we cannot explicate the 'as if' without recourse to belief. If we do countenance acceptance, we will not be able to distinguish between it and belief. See below section IV.

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necessarily also believe the conjunction of the two, though he might have a disposition to acquire that belief.

But suppose we could somehow revise RBM to fix up these difficulties. Still, RBM would fail because it cannot sustain the distinction between real and ersatz belief. RBM is severely focused on the predictability of a person's behavior, given background knowledge of her desires, needs, and external circumstances. However, we cannot distinguish between real and ersatz belief in terms of different predictions about a subject's behavior. The only relevant prediction in the vicinity is this: "If (roughly) a person, x, acts *as if* S obtains, then there is no fact about x such that if that fact were discovered then that would show that x had not believed that S obtained." But of course, this prediction is not about X's behavioral dispositions at all. And of course, that prediction can be false when RBM is true. Acting 'as if' is as insecure as was belief-feeling.

I will spare the reader the time of going through the mixed theory, internal representation theory, and functionalism in detail (See Alston 1996). Instead, I will make do with just pointing out that the mixed theory is heir to the shortcomings of feeling and behavior theories. Also, neither defining belief as the aptness of internal language representations to be deployed (Internal Representation Theory, See Fodor 1968, 1975) nor as whatever it is that causes certain behavioral dispositions (Functionalism, see Putnam, 1975), has the power to distinguish conceptually between real and ersatz belief. In ersatz belief internal representations can be in place and be apt for bringing about relevant behavior without real belief being present. And the same holds for there being in place whatever it is that creates a disposition to act in relevant ways, without a real belief being in place.

I conclude that the major proposals for understanding belief are not entirely adequate, since they would have us identify merely ersatz beliefs as real beliefs. Whichever analysis of belief that appeals to us, in order to cover all sorts of belief we must tack on a further condition, where 'A' is the favored *analyzandum* of belief, and F is as before, yielding:

> S believes that p iff (1) A, and (2) there is no fact, F, about S at t such that F subverts A at t.

IV

Belief and Acceptance

We need a term to describe a state of a subject that is neutral as to whether the subject believes p or has only an ersatz belief that p. Various philosophers have introduced 'acceptance' as a technical term to cover what to them, respectively, might bear some similarities to belief, but isn't belief. These philosophers include William Alston (1992), L. Jonathan Cohen (1992), Robert Stalnaker (1984), Bas Van Fraassen (1980), and Edna Ullman-Margalit and Avishai Margalit (1992).

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They do not all have the same distinction in mind, however. This is partly because of different conceptions of belief and partly because of being interested in different things to contrast with belief. In any case, the proposals are not meant to capture an established difference in usage but to mark a distinction felt needing to be made. Indeed, the favored distinction may be overlooked in ordinary language or get expressed in various ways, not always clear and adequate. In the spirit of this history, I propose that we reserve the term 'acceptance' (although it is not entirely satisfactory) for the state that is neutral as to whether the subject believes p or has only an ersatz belief that p. Acceptance, for me, does not involve a judgment about a person's overarching self-hood. Acceptance applies, roughly, to what is true of a time-slice subject at a given time. Neither does that S *accepts* p entail that at any time S performs an act of *accepting* p. Of course, S may have done so, but acceptance can also exist without a decision by a subject, being simply a state of the subject, engendered by choice or not.

Noting needed emendations in Behavior Theory, in the meantime we could say that S $accepts_b$ that p iff S has the dispositions to behave that S has when S believes that p. For the Internal Representation Theory, we would say that S $\text{accepts}_{\text{ir}}$ that p iff S has internal representations, I, apt for causing behavior, B, such that I and B are of the sort that S has when S believes that p. Both formulations are meant to be neutral as to whether S also S believes p. And similarly for functionalism. My suggestion will not work as is for the Feeling Theory and for the Mixed Theory. And that is because the major advocate of the Feeling theory, L. Jonathan Cohen, and an important backer of the Mixed Theory, William Alston, reserve the term 'acceptance' for purely behavioral dispositions, so would not want to apply that term to feeling dispositions. So, to accommodate Cohen we would have to distinguish between 'feeling acceptance' and 'behavioral acceptance.' And to accommodate Alston would want to distinguish between 'mixed,' 'behavioral,' and 'feeling' acceptance.

'Acceptance,' meant technically, cannot be subverted, although the components of a subject's believing that p can be numerically identical to components of S's believing that p, and believing can be subverted. (Nonetheless, as a non-technical, every day word, we might imagine someone who exhibits all the components of 'acceptance' – be they what they may – saying that he never *really* accepted p, although he thought he did! However, as I am using the term, 'acceptance' cannot be so construed.)

So far I have remained neutral between accounts of belief and acceptance. Others have endorsed an acceptable modified version of Alston's mixed theory of S believes that p, which goes like this (Gellman 2007):

(1) If S considers whether p is the case, S will tend to feel it to be the case that p.

(2) If someone asks S whether p, S will have a tendency to respond in the affirmative.

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(3) S will tend to use p as a premise in theoretical and practical reasoning where this is appropriate.

(4) S will tend to act in ways that would be appropriate if it were the case that p, given S's goals, aversions, and S's other propositional attitudes.

(5) S has a tendency, when acting in ways cited by (1)-(4), to act in a way that displays S's feeling that p.

I now add this clause:

(6) There is no fact, F, about S such that F subverts (1)-(5).

Let's call this 'belief$_m$' since it is a mixed view of belief, including dispositions both of feeling and behavior. Accordingly, we can define 'acceptance$_m$,' mixed acceptance, as (1)-(5) minus (6), leaving open whether (6) is true.

Believing and Being a 'Believer'

Sometimes, we not only say that a person 'believes,' but also that she is a '*believer*' in or of something. The latter locution has especial use in religions. A person is said to be an Islamic 'believer' or a 'believer' in Jesus. One can, though, also be a believer in extraterrestrial life, a believer in the Chicago Cubs, and a believer in trickle-down economics. A believer has a loyalty, a trust, a commitment, a stick-with-it-ness to whatever it is she is a believer in. A believer in extraterrestrial life will not easily change his mind, will be dedicated to discovering evidence for the existence of life away from earth, subscribe to magazines fostering his point of view, and the like. And a believer in the Chicago Cubs will go to the Cubs games religiously season after season, not giving up on a team that gives fans only little cause to cheer.

As the term 'believer' is ordinarily used, that S believes$_m$ that p does not entail that S is a 'believer' in p or something closely associated with p. S must also have a believer's loyalty, and the like. But neither does S being a 'believer' in X *entail* with regard to salient propositions in the vicinity of X that S *believes$_m$* those propositions (with the possible exception of propositions such as those stating that it is good, worthwhile, or meaningful to be loyal to X.) S may only accept$_m$ those propositions without believing$_m$ them, the degree of a person's trust and faith in X being an indication of mere acceptance$_m$, as much as of belief$_m$. So there is no entailment either way between believing$_m$ and being a believer. Indeed, there is no clear probability line from being a believer to belief$_m$, since, for example, a pronounced loyalty and trust can be a sign of mere acceptance$_m$ fused, say, with strong hope and desire just as much as of belief$_m$. I suspect that the judgment that a person is a 'believer' often has a strong social dimension, emphasizing a person's dispositions, in behavior and feeling, as conforming to an expected pattern of a group's behavior. A person who is a 'believer' shares his loyalty and trust with others who recognize him as such.

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This should lead us to a consideration of the social dimensions of religious belief, which I have pursued elsewhere and whose continuation I leave for another time.

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Existential Habit:
The Role of Value in Praxis[1]

Bonita Lee

Abstract: This exposition focuses on purposeful behaviours as efforts toward self-actualization. I introduce habit as a set of value-based behaviours that is different than the typical habit of physical movements. Each of those praxis is controlled by cognition driven by values – both personal and societal, and their following habits are the result of complex learning. I will then elaborate on three important topics: (1) awareness and efficacy with respect to habit, (2) collective habit, and (3) implications of existential habit on the individual's as well as the society's wellbeing.

Keywords: awareness, efficacy, praxis, value.

Existential Habit: The Role of Value in Praxis

We often hear the word habit to describe a lot of human behaviours. We use it so easily and extensively to describe things we do that tend to be repetitive. It goes from behaviours such as regularly coming to class late to waking up at certain hours every day. It also refers to how we normally do something: how we take notes, how we read, how we eat, and so on. In other cases, habit also talks about how we deal with others or problems; for instance, we may have heard things like someone's habit is to pick a fight with others.

Repetitions are to be found in every individual: they influence how we think, act, and respond to stimuli. Of course, repetition is not always a good thing. We, after all, know the term bad habit. It refers to thoughts, acts, and responses that are useless or even prevent individuals to achieve their goals. Nevertheless, the fact that these patterns exist despite not always being helpful proves that there is some reinforcing mechanism behind them. This suggests there must be something to gain from keeping this kind of behaviours. With that consideration in mind, I define habit as repetitive and seemingly automatic behaviour that is directed toward a goal. This definition is also aligned with those offered by other authors (see: Camic 1986; Verplanken and Orbell 2003; Verplanken 2006; Neal,

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Wood, and Quinn 2006; Saling and Philips 2007; Wood and Neal 2007; Neal and Wood 2009; Gardner 2012).

Using that definition, there are three major requirements needed to categorize something as habit. Those are behaviours, repetition and *automation*, and finally, direction as well as goal (e.g Verplanken and Aarts 1999; Aarts and Dijkterhuis, 2000; Neal and Wood 2009; Middleton 2011; Gardner 2012). Behaviour is a set of verbal and non-verbal acts coming from *automatization*. These behaviours are what we can rather objectively observe. They are also the unit analysis of most studies regarding habit.

Repetition and *automatization* are the ways in which acts are carried out over and over in many settings. Different scholars tend to emphasize different parts of this process. Some believe that behaviours should be repetitive and done quite frequently, while others believe the *automatization* part to be the more significant one. Nevertheless, I would argue that the two of them are inseparable. Using the learning principle, repetition of associated response – as a result of reinforcement – would yield in conditioned behaviour. Only after behaviour is acquired, the *automatic process* can take place. It is said to be automatic because it will be the most likely way an individual would act or react in a certain situation. In other words, *automatization* refers to an individual's reaction time, or to the most natural thing the individual is compelled to do; although in many cases, an individual does not always follow through.

Nevertheless, especially in complex behaviours, there is always a goal behind every behavioural assimilation causing *automatization*. In spite of short reaction time, there is an underlying cognitive process facilitating habitual behaviours. It means, habit is not automatic, but rather seems to be automatic.

Lastly, the third component of habit is the direction and goal of behaviours. Every behaviour has a goal; hence, it is done in certain ways in order to be achieved. From efficiency, pleasure, or simply harm-avoidance, there are many reasons why we constantly behave the way we do. This kind of reasons, on the existential level – on what makes us who we are as persons, is what I am going to elaborate on.

Before we go there, however, I would like to point out the types of habit related to the purpose of behaviours. The first one is physical habit or habit of movement. The goal of this habit is to increase physical mastery of a task, in which such mastery can become a distinguishing feature of an individual (see: Matiegka 1921; Laban and Ullmann 1971). It can be seen in factory workers whose movements are so fast and accompanied with incredible precision. Another example of physical habit is the one happening in sports in which athletes often develop some habitual techniques that are unique on their own (see: Gupta and Mahalanabis 2006; Shilling 2008). Lochte, an elite Olympic swimmer, for example, would swim on his back following the turn on freestyle to decrease the amount of drag. That habit is purposely done to minimize the drag and consequently maintain the propulsion speed. In other words, that habit will

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increase his swimming efficiency. Of course, in the end, that efficiency is hoped to increase his chance of winning the race.

The second type of habit is a little more complicated than the first one. In the previous example, we can see that athletes develop certain physical habits in order to win the competitions. Now, let's compare that example with another one. Imagine an individual who treats everything in life as a competition. That individual would repetitively think, act, and respond toward most stimuli in a competitive way because winning is such an important thing for them. In some way, that individual may define life as a constant competition.

From these examples, we can see how the two types are essentially different. The first one focuses on one specific behaviour for one specific purpose that is not pervasive. It is less likely to affect every other aspect of one's life. In the latter, I would offer to use the term 'existential habit,' a type of habit which is driven by something essential in an individual's life. Habit, in this context, is not always a single repetitive behaviour as in physical habit. This kind of habit is directed toward a goal of meaningfulness in an individual's existence. The behaviours presented are consistent across situations depending on what *value* the individual signifies the most. This type of habit will have more complications and will be applied in more aspects of life. It contains sets of behaviours from the same category that happen in many settings. We often call it pattern of behaviour; however, we have to remember that not all pattern of behaviour is habit. In this context, the type of patterned behaviour we are going to discuss is that of praxis. In general, praxis is behaviour intended for some goal.

To some extent, such patterned behaviour is similar with the concept of personality. Personality itself is patterned functions interacting in a way that makes individuals unique (Hall and Lindzey 1961; Allport 1961; Deaux and Snyder 2012). It means individuals with certain personalities tend to think, feel, and act consistently across situations.

Personality makes us appear as we are; however, it doesn't decide why we do things the way we do or want things that we want (Bilsky and Schwartz 1994). In this case, we can observe an individual's patterns of behaviour without being able to conclude the type of personality one has, although some habits may be easier to adopt by certain personalities or some personalities may result in some habits (Eysenck 1973). In conclusion, we must keep in mind that personality and habit are two different things.

First, habit is more superficial than personality. Habit is something brought out in the form of acts; while personality doesn't always come out as behaviour (Ouellette and Wood 1998; Wood 2017). In this case, even if I have a certain habit, it doesn't mean that I have a certain personality; however, if I have a certain personality, chances are high that I would behave in a habitual way. The second difference is that habit always serves a sense of purpose while personality, as a function, keeps the individual's dynamic the way it is. Meanwhile, even some insignificant habit like waking up late at noon has a

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purpose, such as to enjoy more sleep, do more work at night, or simply to avoid some activities in life.

Although personality and habit are intertwined, personality does not give habit – especially, existential habit – a direction it requires. It does not give habit any reasons explaining the way things are done. It does not provide habit with any goal. At the same time, habit needs something else that would give it a sense of direction of what to achieve (Allport 1961; Aarts and Dijksterhuis 2000; Pakizeh, Gebauer, and Maio 2007). That something is value, which I will explain further on.

Habit and Learning

To some extent, value and habit are results of learning, both operant and social ones. Both value and habit come from our own experience regarding what feels good and what does not; hence, we would increase behaviours resulting in good feelings (Mowrer 1960; Daniels 2001; Dezfouli and Balleine 2012). Tantrums, for example, can be seen as an individual's learnt habit. It increases an individual's enjoyment – as in getting what's wanted. It could also be a result from our observation of others' behaviours (Bandura 1969; Mezirow 1997; Ouellette and Wood 1998; Crossley 2001). In this example, the individual might know that tantrum was efficient in getting what one wanted because someone else did it. Or, in a different example, we may believe that money is good, because everyone else gives weight to it.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that learning is crucial in habit, it is noticeable that some habits are easier to adopt than others (Wood 2009). Researchers attributed it to our brain's hedonistic function which aims to maximize immediate pleasure (e.g.: Holbrook and Hirchman 1982; Dewey 2002; Grabenhorst and Rolls 2011; Berridge and Kringelbach 2015). It means that some stimuli become more efficient reward reinforcing behaviours than others. This is consistent with Spranger's (1928) belief that economic and aesthetic values will be easier to adopt because they focus on survivability and pleasure that are more innate than the needs for truth and understanding (theoretic values).

From an evolutionary point of view, our behaviours would first aim to ensure our survivability. We only do things that will help us continue on living while avoid things that might do us any harm. After that, we would start to think about the pleasure aspect of things. The same happened in social settings: being in a social group provided a higher chance of survival due to the division of labour and safety in number (Brewer and Caporael 2006). The smaller amount of work people had to do individually provided more time to explore other aspects in life such as arts. As life progressed, our needs diversified and we ended up living with different purposes in life. In other words, it is suggested that human evolution affects the development of values which inherently interact with

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people behaviours (Axelrod 1986; Krebs and Davies 2009; Simmie and Martin 2010).

Value in Habit

Before we talk about how value would affect an individual's habit, let us first review what value is. Value is defined as sets of guidelines/directions toward *the essential* in life (Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey 1960; Hofstede and Bond 1984; Maio and Olson 2000; Rohan 2000; Maio et al. 2006; Rokeach 2008; Schwartz 2013). Given humans' tendency toward self-actualization as the premise, every behaviour is somehow directed toward it (Ryff and Keyes 1995; Reker 2000; Reker and Woo 2011). Since every behaviour is directed by value, every act toward self-actualization is also based on the values one has. Ideally, those behaviours are conducted in the most effective and efficient ways toward that goal (Makowski 2017). Nevertheless, we shouldn't forget that what is deemed essential in life is different for each individual. It means, everybody is looking for different things in life; hence, their behavioural attributes are different as well (Spranger 1928; Allport 1961).

This dynamic between value and habit is moderated by cognition as the basis of praxis. Value is considered to structure our cognition, in a sense that cognition is always influenced by the values an individual holds. As much as we want to believe otherwise, as human beings, our perception is always clouded by our standards and ideals embedded in cognition. Analogically speaking, values would act as glasses that filter how we perceive the world, defining and prioritizing all stimulus presented; and eventually shape how we assess and behave in life (de Dreu and van Lange 1995). This system explains why individuals with different beliefs would react quite differently in the same situation (Schreiber et al. 2013).

As certain values become predominant, their presentation would be more obvious as well. They will show in both our overt and covert behaviours with some specific and consistent themes. A set of consistent behaviours resulted from an individual's values is what existential habit is. It's not always the *same exact behaviour* done over and over in one specific situation or condition. Instead, it represents *thematic behaviours* that seem to be automatically directed to serve a certain value domain.

Although it looks simple, the actual underlying process is not simple at all. The dynamic of how value transformes into behaviours can be seen in stages. First, our ideals, whether we realize it or not, will decide what it is that we want in life. These ideals are what we consider the most important; and consequently, they affect everything that we do (Bruner and Goodman 1947; Carter and Schooler 1949). These ideals are also accompanied by a set of standards. What differentiates ideals and standards is that ideals refer to the desired conditions or achievements while standards refer to minimum requirements (Campbell et al. 2001). Both of them are the baseline of our perception (Postman, Bruner, and

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McGinnies 1948). It means that there are two functions happening simultaneously here: we are chasing ideals while comparing everything to standards.

Most of the time it is obvious that we have some recurrent patterns that we use to notice everything. These patterns are also found in how individuals evaluate stimuli by comparing every stimulus they perceive (including social ones) with the ideals and standards they have (Wood 1989). For example, when we are meeting someone, each one of us will notice and evaluate that same person differently. Some of us would evaluate that person by how good they look or how educated they appear. Some may evaluate that person based on how kind and warm he/she is, how generous, how rich, and so on. This is the second stage of existential habit; the ideals and standards we have define what and how we evaluate everything.

Following evaluation, the third stage is decision making followed by behaviour. Although individuals evaluate everything, they don't always do something about it (Restle 1961). Not doing anything can be a choice taken when an individual is facing some kind of stimulus needing action (Glasser 1999). In a way, of course, not doing anything can be a behaviour on its own; besides, in situations in which actions are unnecessary, the decision not to act is inevitable. For instance, when we see someone in the street, we may evaluate that person; however, that is how far we would go. It is unnecessary for us to approach that person and state our opinion. But, if we were asked our opinion about the person we just saw, we would decide whether or not we should make a comment. Further, our comment or our silence will be the behaviour following the stimulus.

Just like in the previous example, we should remember that everything that happens in real life always happens in a context. Although our own values would affect how we perceive, evaluate, and eventually react toward a stimulus, we cannot dismiss the society's role in the process. Everything we perceive, we would evaluate against the societal values and norms. From that evaluation, we would then decide which action to take. We might do something, following our own value or the societal value, depending on the situation and on how significant our personal value is in the context.

Now that we established that an individual's habit is profoundly affected by value, it is time to assert the two categories of value. Based on where they come from, those are individual/personal value and societal value (Bernard, Gebauer, and Maio 2006). Societal value works quite the same as personal value, except that it belongs to society. To some degree, societal value pressures individuals to conform to their desirable behaviours. Conversely, despite society playing a huge role in an individual's life, the individual would not necessarily internalize societal value as their own. The individual will evaluate their own value and its accordance with societal value.

In some situations, our personal value becomes so significant that societal value doesn't seem to matter at all. We may even deviate from society's

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standards and ideals, just because we believe – or even feel like – it is the right thing to do. In other situations, we may let societal pressure take over and behave according to the society's desirable state, while inhibiting the way we normally or *automatically* behave. In such cases, those behaviours are not habit; the individual only behaves so in that specific situation alone. Unless, of course, those deviations of habitual behaviours are actually a detour helping individuals to achieve their goal in the long term. Or, if such deviations from the personal value driven habit are repeated over and over, that individual may, to some degree, internalize the societal value as their own.

Now that we can see how value – both personal and societal – affects our behaviours through cognition, we can draw a limitation of habit in this existential context. This is how we could assess whether or not certain behaviours of an individual would fall into the existential habit category. We know that in order to categorize behaviour as habit, it must possess the three components of habit stated previously. Those same standards also apply to existential habit, in addition to value driven behaviours ('value driven' being the operative phrase). It means that both personal and societal value can be the foundations of those praxis. It doesn't really matter which value actually motivates the individual's habit; it is existential habit, as long as those value driven habits consist of behaviours, repetition and *automaticity*, as well as direction and goal. That being said, it is justifiable to conclude that existential habit is not always self-directed.

With this claim, we should also exclude repetitive behaviours with little to none implication to the meaning and purpose in life. Biologically driven behaviours – such as dependence, addiction, and impulsive behaviours – although they are repetitive and as if driven by the pleasure principle, are not existential habit. They should not be even considered as habit (Perkins 1999). Those behaviours are not regulated by cognition, they're often not choices, and they are driven by the brain's more primitive function.

On that note, existential habit is limited strictly to those behaviours repeated, somewhat automatically, across settings toward an essential goal in life that must be motivated by value. Of course it would then depend on how we define value. For example, if an individual keeps doing something he dislikes but is required by others, it might not be his/her life goal, but he/she keeps doing it because he/she fears to be left behind. On that case, his/her behaviours might be caused by the social-dependency value according to which he/she believes that he/she lives for the sake of others. It is also possible that this repetitive behaviour is simply motivated by fear; however, if that is the case, it is also possible that the same fear is value driven. Although this would be an interesting enigma to discuss, we are not going into its details here.

Going back to the topic of our discussion, from a value-actualization perspective, other behaviours – especially if repetitive – that aren't aligned with the individual's value should be considered deviations. They are deviations

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because, even though they are repetitive, they might not be the most *automatic* thing to do. In another words, these behaviours are not habit. Nonetheless, should these deviations occur more and more often, this could potentially suggest changes in the individual's philosophical structure of cognition. When this happens, things such as shifting in value, conflict, and anomie would often be inevitable. I will try to explain these implications in the next section.

As mentioned earlier, there are two sources of value – societal and personal. In this context, we know existential habit mostly refers to personal value even though it would constantly be on a par with societal value. There are two possible extreme scenarios here. First, both personal and societal value are aligned with each other; and second, the personal value is against the societal value. To some degree, personal and societal value would manifest discrepancy.

In an ideal world, personal and societal value are in sync. In this case, the individual's life goal will go in the same direction with the society's goal; hence, they are going to accommodate each other. There should not be any significant problem here because the pressure from the societal value would reinforce one's own habit. The problem is, even though such an ideal condition is longed for, in our post-modern world, where everyone can aspire to be anything, such a fitting model will be hard to find. That being said, the next best scenario will be that in which the individual's value and habit are not in sync with the societal values, but they are not conflicting with societal values. If the individual's value and habit are consistent enough, the individual should be able to focus on their own effort toward their goal without harming society's goal. Nevertheless, they may feel neither supported nor barred in the process. Lastly, there is also a scenario in which both personal and societal value are conflicting; to some extent, this could not go on indefinitely, without one harming the other. Of course, discrepancy is not always present in every situation. One can feel that their value is conflicting with the societal value in some aspect of life, but not other.

When such conflicts happen continuously, as mentioned before, the following choices are possible. First, the individual can choose to hold on their personal value and deviate from societal value. Second, one's personal value can shift so they can conform to societal value and do as the society desires. Third, one can stick to the status quo where this conflict is not resolved and eventually resorts to the state of anomie. Of course, each of these choices would have its own consequences. For example, significant deviation from societal value may result in social exclusion, total conformity can result in blind devotion swallowing the individual's sense of individuality, and anomie can lead to confusion. All of these could eventually impact on the level of the individual's – and potentially – society's wellbeing.

Awareness and Efficacy

In this exposition, habit is seen as behaviours directed specifically toward a goal that should contribute to the individual's meaning making process. In many ways,

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this concept is strongly aligned with action theories' praxiology. This happens because humans' actions, as purposeful beings, are always motivated by their ideals – or by what they believe to be their ideals. There are two major concepts related to the purposefulness of existential habit that need to be discussed here. Those are awareness and efficacy – effectiveness as well as efficiency.

Awareness refers to the degree to which individuals know the habit that they have, the goal, and what causes it (Silvia and Duval 2001; Verplanken and Orbell 2003). Efficacy, on the other hand, refers to the quality of the sets of behaviours in achieving the goal (Marley 2000). Both effectiveness and efficiency will intervene with the internal regulation of the habit itself (Wood and Neal 2007; Vohs and Baumeister 2016).

In habit, understanding self-awareness will help us understand the individual as a whole. In general, this kind of awareness is important for any individual in order to function well in life (Brown and Ryan 2003). The inability to be self-aware would hinder one's effort toward self-actualization because one may not be able to correctly evaluate the efficacy of their own actions (Taylor and Brown 1988; Townley 1995). Therefore, it will be hard for them to adjust their actions toward an intended goal. There are two types of awareness to be discussed in this context: awareness toward the behavioural aspects of the habit and awareness toward its value.

To some degree, individuals being unaware of themselves, of their cognition or behaviours, is normal (Natsoulas 1998). The same unawareness is also what makes it appealing for us to get to know who we are even more. As a result of learning to understand ourselves, we are becoming more integrated individuals (Terrace and Metcalfe, 2005). Of course, there are many reactions following when new information about ourselves is acquired. For example, if we point a bad habit to a friend, she might respond in different manners. First, she might say that she didn't know or didn't think she behaved like that. Second, she might say that she couldn't help but behaving like that. Lastly, she might say that she knows she did it and she intended it, which is suggesting that she is aware of the value and the consequences of her bad habit.

The first and second responses would suggest that she lacked awareness of her own habit. The difference between them is that in the first case, she wasn't aware of the habit at all, while in the second case, she simply wasn't aware of the goal – or the value – of such behaviour.

Now that we have established the role awareness plays in habit, let us see how efficacy would come into play. Of course, as humans, it comes naturally for us to put our efforts in the most effective and efficient way toward our intended goal (Makowski 2017). Effectiveness refers to a degree in which habit is actually moving toward its goal, while efficiency is the optimization of resources an individual has in moving toward the desirable goal. Efficiency can be measured by how immediately and how easily these habits are performed while getting

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any results. In this context, what we seek to know is the effect of behaviours on the bigger goal – human wellbeing.

It is clear that some habits can be effective and efficient at a given time, but they would potentially harm the individual in the long run. The same mechanism also applies in value-driven habit because the nature of value would interfere with the individual's worldview. Some values might put little to none emphasis on the future, while others would fixate on it. This mechanism also dictates how individuals define the self-actualized version of themselves, their meaning in life, and eventually their ideas of wellbeing. With that in mind, it is wise to consider these aspects before deciding whether or not one's habit is bad or good. In this context, a bad or good habit is categorized solely by its efficacy toward the goal – and the individual's perception toward the attributes of the goal – instead of the realistic consequences of his/her behaviour.

As we can see, habit is directed toward a goal whether or not we are aware of it and whether or not its behaviours are effective and efficient. Ideally, these aspects should interact in a dynamic which is beneficial to the individual. At the same time, individuals who are aware of their own value, goal, and behaviours should be able to regulate their behaviours in a more effective and efficient way. Because they know what they want in life, they would do things more purposefully (Karoly 1993; Schwarzer 2014). With such awareness, they will be able to evaluate both their environment and their position in a certain situation in a more realistic manner. They will be able to consider whether or not their own value and behaviour would be suitable – or at least acceptable – in society (Wrosch et al. 2003). Additionally, they also understand the reciprocity between their own value and habit and those of society.

Understanding all this helps them make more informed decisions on what actions to take. For instance, if they should behave according to their habit, or they should deviate from it for the time being. Those actions might be a detour from an individual's goal – it means, they might be inefficient; however, they are thought to be effective in serving one's goal in the long run. In this case, it can be concluded that the individual has developed a certain degree of personal maturity where their own value-bound identity would be integrated with the societal value (Chickering and Reisser 1992).

Nevertheless, as stated previously, it is also possible that individuals may not be aware of their own value. In consequence, individuals can just behave habitually to follow the societal value they perceive or to follow what everyone else is doing (Spranger 1928; Hollander 1958; Liebrand et al. 1986). In such a case, we would not always know which one of these will affect the individual's habit as well. I would argue that such behaviours could still be categorized as habit coming from the individual's perception of the societal value. This could possibly be the case more often than we would like to admit. Many of our behaviours – and even habit – result from our perception of societal ideals and

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standards. This supports the previous claim in which existential habit is simply societal value driven habit – instead of being personal value driven habit.

Especially in cases of unawareness, the societal values might replace the personal ones. In this case, the individual is simply unaware of his/her own value; hence, he/she behaves somewhat automatically using the guidelines of societal value. There is no conflict between the two types of value, because the individual knows only one value – the societal one; hence, habits based on societal value would emerge somewhat easily as well. To some degree, internalization of societal value occurs. There are many scenarios that can happen in this process; for instance, the individual feels compelled to do something just because it feels mandatory. Nevertheless, the perfect scenario to hope for would be that in which the individual develops an understanding on why those behaviours considered mandatory are good for him/her. When the individual completely takes in societal value along with his/her considerations as their own, that individual has also developed awareness.

The question is, what happens if many people in a society adopt the same habit. For instance, if everyone in a society gives weight to money and believes that everything is to be done to get more of it. In his context, collective habit becomes possible and could be described as certain habits adopted by the majority of people in a society in which the direction or goal and the associated behaviours would be the same. For example, they would all monetize everything. Given that habit is a result of learning (Mowrer 1960; Dickinson 1985; Yin and Knowlton 2006; Lally et al. 2010; Lally, Wardle, and Gardner 2011), the concept of collective habit would make sense because it is caused by social learning happening in many individuals sharing the same culture, time, and space.

Collective Habit

At the end of the previous section, I mentioned the possibility of habit shared by many individuals in a society. The term I proposed to use was collective habit – or to be precise, collective existential habit, since this kind of habit is also driven by values. It refers to habit seemingly adopted by the majority of people in a group. Despite the term 'collective,' this habit does not necessarily involve cultural value. Instead, it embodies each individual's own values – or perceived societal values – that happen to be similar with the others' values in the group. Since what is socially desirable is not always happening in reality, I find it difficult to accept that, in this case, we could talk about cultural value.

Every society has a set of desirable goals. The problem with ideals is that, often, they are not reflected by actual behaviours. This explains how, on an individual level, discrepancy between the individual's ideal and their real self is inevitable; this effect is enhanced in collective settings where our involvement would increase our positive evaluations and decrease the negative evaluations of the in-group. Perhaps, it is simply hard for us to believe that the group we belong to is not as good as we thought it should be. Or maybe, we believe that we are

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unique compared to everyone else in the group, that we think and act differently than everyone else. Just like in Hardin's tragedy of the commons (Hardin 1968; see also: Dietz, Ostrom, and Stern 2003), we fail to predict others' behaviours in the same situation we are. At the same time, others are also prone to this cognitive fallacy and everyone ends up in the same or worse situation than before.

I will explain the case of cultural and personal value shared by many using the following example. Let us imagine a society claiming to give weight to friendliness, warmth, and tolerance. They believe that they value those attributes the most and those attributes should be reflected in their behaviours. They expect people from their society – including themselves – to be friendly, warm, and tolerant. Unfortunately, in reality, they might not actually behave that way. Instead, they may still act friendly, but only when they need something or expect something in return. They might appear warm but act hostile behind others' backs, or even be friendly to in-groups while being hostile to out-groups. If that situation occurs, and observably, a lot of individuals of that society behaves in spite of the cultural values they think they believe in, then their collective existential habit is significantly different than what it should be.

As this could be the case, it is important to understand why such situations can happen in the first place. In this context, I will discuss a few possibilities that could explain this behaviour from the value point of view. First, this behaviour can be traced back to the lack of awareness in addition to mistrust in the societal values; that could be caused by some fallacy in their collective self-presentation. Here, individuals fail to notice their real societal value. Consequently, despite internalizing the real societal value and behaving accordingly to it, they hold on to the desired or ideal societal value. In other words, the discrepancy between the real societal value and the ideal societal value goes unnoticed.

The second possibility is when there are a lot of deviant individuals. When this happens, individuals from the in-group may seem to adopt two different values. Some would stick to the ideal value and behave accordingly, while the others would not. Should these deviants adhere to the same value and behave similarly, collective habit can form. This can especially happen in sub-cultures in which members tend to behave similarly but differently than the mother culture.

The last argument I would provide for this case is related to anomie. In an anomic state, individuals do not seem to have any guidelines to their behaviours. Therefore, these individuals may conform to others' value-based behaviours and/or habit based on values – and not to their own.

Collective habit, i. e. individuals behaving similarly because they share the same or a similar value, is not necessarily a bad or a good thing. As mentioned earlier, most of the time, we cannot judge if a cognition is bad or good. What we can judge is the actual effect of behaviours resulting from the cognition itself. This means that conformity itself should be good when it is directed in a way beneficial for the collective wellbeing – which is the goal of every society

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(Tolbert, Lyson, and Irwin 1998; Orfield 2009; Hall 2013). Keeping this in mind, we should give more attention to the conformed habits and their consequences in society.

I am aware that this claim seems to contradict my previous point regarding the individual's habit – stating that the individual's existential habit is projected for the individual's subjective wellbeing alone. Nonetheless, the same principle is inapplicable for collective existential habit because society aims to the objective wellbeing of its people. In order to achieve that, social responsible acts – including conformity to some degree – from its members is demanded. The next question would be what kind of conformity people adopt.

In a perfect world, individuals should be conforming to the standards and ideals of the society – also known as ideal conformity. Unfortunately, ideal conformity is not always possible as we often adhere to situational conformity. Situational conformity here refers to actions in which we conform to others' behaviours only because many people do so, despite our awareness that such behaviour is not the right thing to do. As for the latter, we should remember, those behaviours cannot always and straightforward be classified as habit; however, should those conforming behaviours occur repeatedly, we might be justified to classify them as habit.

Implications

As we all know, habit is a crucial part of life. Its behaviours are actually the representation of the structure of our mind. The fact that a pattern of behaviours can be traced suggests a specific neural activity regulating it. It is consciously conducted, even if it seems to be automatic and thoughtlessly done. What makes it different than other consciously taken actions is that habit – due to its repetition in its forming process – seems to skip all the metacognition process. In habit, we are simply not aware nor thinking about the very effort of thinking. The previous section has explained how reinforcement plays an important role in habit. Habit, after all, is a set of behaviours resulted from numerous types of learning. The principle of habit acquisition is the same with that of Pavlovian learning; conditioned response stays despite omitting the conditioning stimulus.

There are two things to revisit regarding the implications of existential habit in life, and how it affects the individuals themselves and the society. As stated earlier, the goal of living is to achieve self-actualization, and the acts of doing so will give meaning to life itself. Along the road, there will be one important variable we must not overlook, that is wellbeing – both personal and social (Reker, Peacock, and Wong 1987; Zika and Chamberlain 1992). Needless to say, wellbeing and the act of becoming have to go side by side.

The act of self-actualization is pointless if an individual fails to be at peace with him/herself. Should this scenario happen, it will be hard for the same individual to find meaning for his/her existence; and without meaning, there will be no actualization (Gallagher, Lopez, and Preacher 2009; Keyes 2010). At the

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other end, a well individual will have a sense of purpose of what he/she aims in life. Without it, the feeling or state of wellness will not last.

This is where habit comes into the equation. Individuals with the *right* habit will behave purposefully toward self-actualization. Here, 'right habit' is defined as habit that is effectively directed toward the individual's goal. In this case, habit doesn't necessarily have to be efficient, it just needs to serve the purpose first. Of course, it will be better if habit is efficient as well; however, in many cases, an individual's lack of awareness inhibits its efficiency.

As stated before, individuals possessing awareness are better at regulating their behaviours. They evaluate the stimuli along with the consequences for every actions they might take. Their decisions are based on whether or not the behaviours will assist them toward a desirable end. On the opposite side of awareness, lacking awareness is a threat on wellbeing; for example, it can prevent an individual to behave effectively.

This threat to wellbeing is not only addressed toward the individual alone, but also toward society. As social beings, almost all our actions will impact others (Stern, Dietz, and Kalof 1993; Prilleltensky 2001; Coleman 2009). For example, an individual who litters would impact the cleanliness of the environment. Littering is done because it is easy and fast in fixing one's problems, but it is bad for the environment because it potentially increases diseases and makes the environment uncomfortable to live in. Let us revisit the aggression case for another example in a different context. Take a person who keeps on behaving aggressively when facing situations they don't like. People who are close to them will eventually have to deal with their aggressive behaviour. The aggressive person might yell when given advice, or be really upset when asked to wait, and so on. While as a social being, that individual actually needs the people who try to regulate his/her behaviors, his/her actions will cause a huge amount of pressure toward the others and they might leave him/her for good.

From these two examples, we can see how habit can affect others and why it should be regulated. We can also see that not all habits are actually effective toward a desired goal. Of course, in the end, it is important for individuals to be aware of the habits – and values – they have. Not only this awareness would help in regulating their habit, it will also help them adjust or change the habits they have.

Because value and the existential habits it creates are fundamental in life, most of the time, changing habits is not an easy task. The beliefs and the tendency to behave in a certain way are written in our brain, such that changing these requires changing our brain structures (O'Doherty 2004; Schreiber et al. 2013). Basically, this mechanism is the same with any other learning mechanism which connects synapses and changes the structure of the brain. Potenza (2013) states that individuals with different values and habits have different brain structure activation, indicating different habits. However, we should keep in

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mind that, because these habits are the result of learning, they are always susceptible to change.

Another thing we must evaluate in changing habits is behaviour and its underlying cognition. Essentially, what we aim in changing habits is to eradicate a present habit and to replace it with a more effective one (e.g Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente 1994). This will be a lot more difficult in existential habit because it derives from a process which is more prominent and more fundamental in an individual's cognition which shapes his/her whole world. Consequently, it may not be possible nor necessary to change an individual's values (Nie and Andersen 1974; Beutler and Bergan, 1991). Instead, what is needed is the increasing of an individual's self-awareness regarding their values as well as habits. In other words, individuals should reflect on the reasons prompting them to do things the way they do, on their own standards and ideals, as well as on whether or not their way of doing things is helping them move toward their desirable goals. This kind of understanding will help individuals regulate their behaviours related to their own values (Wong 2010).

Conclusions and Further Research

The main intention of this paper was to theoretically and philosophically elaborate on how value can affect our habits. I started by defining what habit essentially is. I continued by briefly explaining the role of learning in habit formation and its motivation, and I introduced value in the equation. Two types of value have been suggested to affect existential habit: personal and societal value. Thus, habit takes form as patterned behaviours intentionally directed toward what is important in an individual's life and because individuals have different values, they will have different habits. Besides different values, each individual would have different degrees of awareness, as well as of efficacy regarding their values and behaviours, which will make their habits even more diverse.

Furthermore, there are a lot of aspects to cover when discussing existential habit, such as: when values affect habits, how these habits affect our wellbeing, or how we regulate them in real life. There are also a lot of variables linked to the concept that we can explore further, such as awareness, efficacy, and value-habit consistency. Additionally, the list of variables related to the concept of existential habit includes personality and wellbeing. We can also study existential habit from the individual as well as the societal perspective.

As a general conclusion, we would need to start by operationalizing the existing types of value and by comparing them to the individual's actual behaviours. So far, it has not been explained in this paper what *kind of values* should be used when investigating existential habit. What I had in mind were the categories or types of values theorized in Allport's Study of Values based on Spranger's *Lebensformen*. Despite a lack of numerous studies conducted on this topic, I find this construct interesting. The motivation of this interest is that this

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particular construct already specifies six universal values possessed by everyone and states that one of these would be predominant in an individual's life. According to this view, one value will be the primary value and the others will be subsidiary. Moreover, in assessing an individual's existential habit we must consider personal values that are universal, i. e. values that should be able to cover all aspects of life for each individual, as it goes with the premises that value affects all behaviours across all settings. Another thing we need to consider when talking about value is the construct's ability to stratify all its components or dimensions. It is easier to understand this claim by means of an analogy with EPPS: in EPPS, we are able to see which need is the most significant, which needs are less significant and which need is the least significant. Moreover, we can see which needs will be supporting that significant need and how those needs will interact in many aspects in life (Dicken 1959; Piedmont, McCrae, and Costa 1992).

Moving on from which construct of value should be used, we must study further the two types of value mentioned previously, and consider how personal and societal value would affect an individual. Taking into consideration that the individual's personal value and the societal value are not always synchronized, and that the individual is aware of this, we find four ways in which value affects habit. The first one is when both are in sync and understood by the individual; hence, the individual's habit will most likely fit what is socially desirable while catering to one's own purpose. The second one is when the individual is aware of his/her own value but unaware of the societal value; hence the habit can deviate significantly from what is socially desirable. Third, when the individual is aware of the societal value but not of his/her own value; hence, his/her habits might be more inconsistent and inefficient. Lastly, when the individual is unaware of both values, or he/she is in an anomic state – as it happens when the individual is aware of both values, but is unable to choose. In the end, this condition will also be related to the individual's social identity, which is an important topic in social studies.

From then on, we will be able to pinpoint how value – as the baseline of cognition – will affect perception, evaluation, decision making, behaviour, and eventually habit. We will thus be able to assess how and what kind of learning takes place in the acquisition of existential habits, including how social cognition would play a part in it, and we will be justified in approaching personality and value as two different concepts which are intertwined and influence each other.

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A Hegelian Reading of Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Vol. I, to Philosophically Expound Ambedkar's Critique of Caste in his 1932 "Statement of Gandhji's Fast"

Rajesh Sampath

Abstract: This paper will attempt a Hegelian reading of Derrida's *Beast and the Sovereign Vol 1* lectures to unpack certain apories and paradoxes in Ambedkar's brief 1932 statement on modern India's founding figure, Gandhi. In that small text Ambedkar is critical of Gandhi's seemingly saintly attempt at fasting himself to death. Ambedkar diagnoses that Gandhi's act of self-sacrifice conceals a type of subtle coercion of certain political decisions during India's independent movement from British colonialism. In order to unpack philosophical assumptions in Ambedkar's statement, this paper examines Derrida's startlingly original insights into animality, law, and sovereignty in confronting two of the Western tradition's giants in political philosophy, namely Hobbes and Schmitt. My intuition is that Derridean deconstruction can be expanded further by deploying certain Hegelian resources. My ultimate aim is to show how Western notions of man, soul, God, the sovereign, and the state begin to dissolve when examining the Hindu metaphysical cosmology of the caste system. My thesis and concluding reflections argue that only by destroying that cosmological system of politico-metaphysical inequality can a true democratic notion of the sovereign state emerge in the Indian context.

Keywords: Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Jacques Derrida, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, social contract, social philosophy.

Introduction

This paper opens with a central philosophical concept in Hobbes's *Leviathan* on skepticism about reliance on men to 'mediate' God's speech as opposed to receiving God's speech directly and 'immediately.' It turns out that this has everything to do with what that means with regard to obedience to a sovereign in the use of reason to believe or not believe anything; this includes beliefs about authority in general and authority which commands belief. And of course justifying obedience to the Sovereign is the mystery and cornerstone of Hobbes' whole undertaking. And, as we all know, Western secular modernity would not have been possible without this great Hobbessian innovation. The question of skepticism, belief, reason, and authority comprises a key moment in Hobbes's

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Leviathan (1651), namely “Of the Principles of Christian Politiques” in the third Part: “Of A CHRISTIAN COMMON-WEALTH” (Tuck 2008, 26).

We will then unpack this passage utilizing critical resources from Schmitt’s small text of 1938, namely *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*. There, Schmitt brilliantly deconstructs the repetition, difference, and othering of moments in a progression that leads from the animal nature of man in the state of nature to the miraculous conversion of citizens in the social contract; but this is intertwined with an original interpretation of the question of divinity and sovereignty of state in Hobbes by deconstructing the notion of the ‘mortal God’ (Schmitt 2008, 32) in Hobbes’s framework.

We will try to show that Schmitt intuits a complex set of interrelations in a contorted, seemingly impenetrable event: he unearths the indiscernible epochal shift beneath the normative and empirical history of political conceptions that gave birth to secular modernity. Returning to Hobbes while innovating at the same time, Schmitt speaks of what one can call an interrelation between: a) the relation between man and soul in the divine structure of a primordial, preternatural, pre-modern/medieval Christian cosmology that englobes any kind of foreseeable future sovereign structure that is of pure human, artificial origin and b) the relation between a transformed man and the birth of the valid, juridical sovereign through the artificial construction of what will eventually be the non-divine (not derived from the divine) modern constitutional ‘covenant’ that is of human origin, i.e. the prototypical version of the human as modern democratic ‘political citizen.’

Put another way, there is a relation between the created man (as an element of the Creation) and soul relation (in the state of nature), which gives way to the birth of the leviathan; the latter itself is an intrinsic relational unity as ‘mortal God,’ or the ‘huge man’ as “machine animated by the sovereign-representative person.” (Schmitt 2008, 32)[1] Something transpires in terms of this transmogrification of the man-soul relation, which was derived from an immaterial, a prior transcendental creation (namely the Judeo-Christian God), to this new relation of the political human and or the state as a ‘mortal God’; the latter itself is a new Being that has its own ‘animation’ (not soul) through the ‘sovereign-representative person.’ (Schmitt 2008, 32) We need to dissect all these elements, their relations, and interrelations, while uncovering their deeper meaning.

Once we lay out these two moments in Hobbes and Schmitt, while breaking down their parts, analyzing them, and synthesizing them into higher conceptions, we will move to Derrida’s reading of both in his intriguing and cunning lectures on the *Beast and the Sovereign* (2001-2002). In those last lectures towards the end of his life, we find some real gems to appropriate while

[1] This passage is taken out of chapter III of which the title is given as “The leviathan is the ‘mortal God’; at the same time he is representative-sovereign person and a huge machine.” (Schmitt 2008, 4)

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appreciating some of his dazzling deconstructive moves on questions of animality, law, and sovereignty when encountering the two towering giants of modern Western political philosophy (Derrida 2009).[2] This way we can lay down the conditions for our own reading of Ambedkar's 1932 statement on 'Gandji's Fast' (Thorat and Kumar 2009).

Our hypothesis is that meta-concepts – man, soul, God, nature, sovereign, state – in Hobbes and Schmitt, from their strictly Judeo-Christian roots, require a confrontation with the absolute limits of the Derridean deconstructive attempt to decompose the Western metaphysical and onto-theological constructions of thought in general. In the process, Derrida had to invent new terms and neologisms while amalgamating and distending existing terms into other variations of themselves. He tried to work within the 'closure' of the Western metaphysical tradition (not 'end') to catch a glimpse of what is other to the tradition (Derrida 1974, 4). From this perspective, we can try to experience while reflecting on the epochal passage, namely an impossible simultaneity of experience and reflection, from what is strictly within the Western metaphysical context (and its determination of its political philosophical tradition, too) to the 'Other' that in its infinity[3] is irreducible to the West. It transcends its dialectical opposition to the West if characterized as the 'non-West' or 'East.'

Our aim is to expand on Ambedkar's critique of the Indian caste system derived from an ancient Hindu metaphysical cosmology. This involves his strenuous critique of the moral failure of the early to mid-twentieth century Gandhian event of de-colonial liberation from the British Empire that culminated in the birth of an independent, liberal, secular, constitutional, pluralistic democracy in India. It is that very democracy today that is presented to the rest of the world as a shining example of peace and coexistence given the sheer magnitude of its size. Our thesis is that intertwining dimensions from all three

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[2] We know that Derrida treated Hobbes, but for many Derridean scholars at the time, it was great to see him reference Schmitt in these lectures. Towards the end of the first session on December 12th, 2001 (just one day over three months after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks), Derrida (2009, 29) states: "Civil war is the death of the Leviathan, the death of the state, and that at bottom is the subject of our seminar: What is war, today, how can we tell the difference between a civil war and a war in general? What is the difference between civil war as 'war of partisans' (a notion of Schmitt's, who sees in Hobbes 'truly a powerful and systematic political thinker') and a war between states? What is the difference between war and terrorism? Between national terrorism and international terrorism. This systematics of Hobbes is inconceivable without this prosthstatic (at once zoologistic, biologistic, and techno-mechanist) of sovereignty, of sovereignty as animal machine, living machine, and death machine." The little Schmitt quote within Derrida's quote is taken from *The Concept of the Political* (Schmitt 2007, 65). In the second session (December 19th, 2001) of *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Vol. 1, Derrida (2009, 44-55) analyzes two very long passages from *The Concept of the Political* to which we will return. For more on Derrida and Schmitt, see Marder (2012; 2011).

[3] We pay homage to Levinas's ethics as prior to ontology in our responsibility and respect for the Other. See Levinas (1991).

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thinkers – Hobbes, Schmitt, and Derrida with Hegel always hovering on the horizon – can be illuminated and deepened to bring to fruition hidden, unarticulated philosophical assumptions in Ambedkar's statement on a pivotal Gandhian event: one that sealed the fate of millions of oppressed Dalits or the 'outsider caste' (formerly known as 'Untouchables') prior to the birth of modern independent, secular, constitutional, legal Indian democracy. Our purpose is to understand how democratic theory and the phenomenological nature of caste point to skeptical issues of political epistemology that are of a unique nature in the Indian civilizational context and South Asia more broadly speaking.

But we must bracket any simplistic historical, intuitive, and empirical distinctions between 'West' and 'East.' For we have to admit from the outset, we are dealing with a precolonial, colonial, de-colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial spectrum in the Indian historical progression since caste has survived, albeit transformed in various ways, through these various historical phases. Perhaps we speak of a new sense of historical time and historical movement that can also account for epiphenomenal and trans-historical mysteries such as caste. Nevertheless, ultimately, purely Western political philosophical frameworks lead to certain distortions, inconsistences, and incoherent assemblages when trying to overcome certain skeptical obstacles in political epistemology in this unique, non-Western civilizational context.[4] Hence the ideal is to imagine a new liberal, secular, constitutional, legal democratic system in India where the caste system is completely abolished. But that would take the creation of new philosophical intuitions, concepts, and categories that are not available in the Western thinkers under discussion, namely Hobbes, Schmitt, Derrida, and Hegel.

A steady reading is required of the initial Hobbesian skeptical moment, which brings skepticism and reason into tension when it comes to obedience to the sovereign and obedience to believe the sovereign's articulation of anything (Tuck 2008, 256). And then we can move to Schmitt's inventive and powerful analysis of the *Leviathan* in his little groupings of chapters in the scintillating text, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (1938). To recall, however, we said Hegel, particularly his *Phenomenology of Spirit* of 1807 (and not so much his *Philosophy of Right* or anything else in his massive corpus), forms the horizon for our analysis of Derrida's reading of Hobbes and Schmitt to examine the conditions of possibility by which we enter into Ambedkar's critique of the phenomenon known as the Gandhian fast.

The event of the 'fast' – phenomenologically reduced beyond any empirical or historical description – becomes an ontological site. Indeed in 1932 Gandhi threatened to fast himself to death if his wishes regarding a future, post-colonial democratic electorate by competing Indian political parties, factions, and

[4] To our knowledge, the specifically Hindu metaphysical articulation of the phenomenon of caste first originated in the Indian subcontinent with ancient scriptures in Sanskrit that include the Vedas, Upanishads, and the great Epics – Ramayana and Mahabharata. See Doniger (2010).

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constituencies were not met. In a nutshell, Gandhi threatened this extreme act of 'self-immolation' ─ as Ambedkar called it – (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192) if a separate electorate were given to the Dalits, or the formerly known as 'untouchable,' outsider caste (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 187). Ambedkar refers to the Dalits, which means 'broken or oppressed' in Sanskrit, as the 'Depressed Classes' in this text (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 187).

Before asking why this Gandhi-Ambedkar debate was so crucial at the time (fifteen years before eventual independence from the British Empire), one has to inquire into the caste system itself and how it relates to the socio-political body. The Dalits are outside the fourfold Hindu caste system (Brahmin/priests, Kshatriya/warriors, Vaishya/merchants, Shudras/workers) but kept in relation to it as the profane Other within a highly granular, differentiated system of domination. An asymmetric, non-dialectical relation is posited between the fourfold and what is exterior and Other to it. The higher castes are 'pure' along a spectrum, whereas the Dalit/'Depressed Class' are considered impure; they must be kept outside of any and every dimension of ordinary human existence, transaction, conscience, and thought (public or private) that would permit equality between them and those within the cherished caste hierarchy. Segregated souls get materialized in bodies divided in public space, thereby collapsing both the private-public distinction and the soul-body distinction: no doubt, these two binaries form the crux of the Western identity from antiquity to the present. Yet we are not speaking of strictly a Western context even under British colonial rule. As we shall see in Ambedkar's text, this characterization and position of impurity and alterity to the fourfold caste system is not something Dalits accepted by choice nor self-determination. For not only does this require a system of social, political, cultural, and economic domination but one of inhumane treatment and sadistic humiliation that passes itself off paradoxically as morally and metaphysically just, i.e. normalized sense of existence in the polity.

In a way, we are confronting – in the Hindu invention of the caste system – something unthinkable. The unthinkable is not simply that which cannot be thought; it is a remainder or trace to which we cannot admit – that in fact the unthinkable is that which can be thought and felt, and therefore a paradox.

We witness an inhuman system within 'humanity' that is constructed beneath the surface of visible reality: a hidden reality of prejudged souls from previous lives in which some people are considered (due to the arbitrary luck or chance of birth) as enlightened, elevated, and therefore human. But some are other to the human; they are tarnished, darkened, and demonic as those designated others who are the only ones who can and should handle human excrement and dead bodies; hence they are neither human (with regard to the four other castes) nor animal (simply a non-human organism which lacks reason in the state of nature). In other words, they are a social construction but with transcendental-metaphysical origins. In some senses, we need to deconstruct the

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whole Western metaphysical and Judeo-Christian notion of 'birth' just as Heidegger did of 'death.'[5] Hence the justification for our appropriation of Derrida's deconstructive lectures on animality, sovereignty, and law, and the necessity of their transformation and elaboration to spaces where Derrida did not go, given Derrida's engagement with the entire Western metaphysical tradition. The application of Derridean deconstruction to this topic is sorely needed.[6]

In the movement towards independence from British colonialism and the eventual creation of an independent, liberal, secular, legal, constitutional democracy in India, Gandhi resisted Dalit independence from this structure of the 'outsider' Other but always contained in relation to the caste as an eternally subjugated group. It is a type of enslaved alterity: never admitted into the fold but tethered to it at a sufficient distance to maintain the pure-impure distinction while sacrificing any chance for the rope to be cut. Indeed the creation of a separate electorate would have given the Dalits their liberation. The abysmally mysterious machinations underpinning Gandhi's decision to fast to death precisely on this issue is what Ambedkar sets out to unravel. As we shall see, Ambedkar took issue behind the allegedly 'saintly' intentions of Gandhi the 'Mahatma' and his dramatic act of self-annihilation.

This is a tropological space where we can analyze the problematic epochal shift from decolonization from an external Sovereign-God (the British Empire) to

[5] It does not go unnoticed to us, and we will have to return to it time and again in all philosophical investigations, why Heidegger failed to give as robust a critique of the metaphysical conceptions of birth as he did of death in Division II of *Being and Time*. There, Heidegger asks desperately about a great neglect and potential failure of his whole attempt to ground the conditions in the Dasein-analytic in order to frame the possibility of undertaking fundamental ontology as the response to the 'question of the meaning of Being in general.' He states in Chapter V, "Temporality and Historicality": "Although up til now we have seen no possibility of a more radical approach to the existential analytic, yet, if we have regard for the preceding discussion of the ontological meaning of everydayness, a difficult consideration comes to light. Have we indeed brought the whole of Dasein, as regards its authentically *Being-a-whole*, into the fore-having of our existential analysis? It may be that a formulation of the question as related to Dasein's totality, possesses a genuinely unequivocal character ontologically. It may be that as regards *Being-towards-the-end* the question itself may even have found its answer. But death is only the 'end' of Dasein; and, taken formally, it is just *one* of the ends by which Dasein's totality is closed round. The other 'end,' however, is the 'beginning,' the 'birth.'" See Heidegger (1963, 425).

[6] Fields in continental philosophy such as phenomenology, Heidegger's fundamental ontology and the later History of Being, existentialist and structuralist Marxism, poststructuralism (particularly Foucault and Deleuze on anti-fascist and hence anti-normalization processes), and Derrida's deconstruction are critical in this endeavor. There is no way to understand the phenomenon of caste if we do not respond to traditional dialectical procedures in Western metaphysics from the ancient Greeks to the three-moment dialectic ascribed to Hegel. Even Hegel's philosophy (in our reading of it) is not reducible to a simple three-moment of dialectic. Hence his thought forms the horizon by which we will apply Derrida to the reading of Ambedkar.

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our critical deconstruction of the birth of the secular, constitutional, liberal, pluralistic democratic state in India. For such a 'democracy' maintained its subsistence and in many respects is conditioned by the Hindu will to the metaphysical truth of caste and the transmigration of souls: namely the strange animal-human-machine-divine entity that is the hierarchical, feudalistic, and thus supremely anti-modern and anti-Western enigma called the caste system. Therefore, Derrida's reading of the animal, sovereignty, and law in his curious encounter with Hobbes and Schmitt has the utmost consequence for us. It raises the possibility of a radical philosophical rethinking of the nature of society, state, and modernity – whether in Western or Eastern civilizations.[7] One can attempt to interpret caste while intermingling conceptual dimensions within the scintillating texts of Hobbes, Schmitt, and Derrida but also articulate how the philosophical deconstruction of caste surpasses those Western impulses too.

[7] In the third session (January 16th, 2002) of the *Beast and Sovereign*, Derrida analyzes another long passage from Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* (1932) to which we will return time and time again. Derrida (2009, 73) summarizes the points he gleans from the long Schmitt passages: "What must be noticed in this Schmittian logic – whether or not we subscribe to it – what we must note from our point of view here is first of all this series of gestures (at least three), whereby: 1) Schmitt announces or denounces the nonpolitical nature of the concept of humanity or the humanitarian, of humanitarianism (Universal Declaration of Human Rights beyond the state, etc.); 2) Schmitt announces or denounces, under this apparent nonpoliticality, a self-interested hyperpoliticality, a disguised intensification of political interests of an imperialist and especially economical form; 3) (and this is what will matter most to us), Schmitt announces and denounces what is terrifying (*schrecklich*) and even terrorizing in this pretension, in this hyperstrategic, hyperpolitical hypocrisy, in this cunning intensification of the political. What is terrifying, according to him, what is to be feared or dreaded, what is *schrecklich*, scary, what inspires terror, because it acts through fear and terror, is that this humanitarian pretension, when it goes off to war, treats its enemies as 'hors la loi [outside the law]' and 'hors l'humanité [outside humanity]'… i.e. like beasts: in the name of the human, of the human rights and humanitarianism, other men are then treated like beasts, and consequently one becomes oneself inhuman, cruel, and bestial. One becomes stupid [*bête*], bestial, cruel, fearsome, doing everything to inspire fear, one begins to take on the features of the most fearsome werewolf (let's not forget the wolves), because one is claiming to be human and worthy of the dignity [*digne de la dignité*] of man. Nothing, on this view, would be less human than this imperialism which, acting in the name of human rights and the humanity of man, excludes men and humanity and imposes on men inhuman treatments. Treats them like beasts." One could assume that Derrida is looking at the immediate months ensuing after 9/11 and before the American imperialist wars begin. He is not simply making a critique of war but asking profound questions about and articulating non-dialectical tensions between concepts of the human, humanity, human rights, the political, and man as animal in treating other men as animals and hence becoming cruel, inhuman. We will not be looking at the post-9/11 American imperialist war machine that sought to vanquish the 'inhuman' enemy of the terrorists in their attempt to defend 'humanity' and democratic 'human rights.' Rather, we will need to invert, distort, disaggregate these Derridean ideas to uncover a great complexity at work in the Ambedkarite critique of Gandhi's alleged humanism and ascetic event to fast himself to death.

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Our deductions from Hobbes to Schmitt's reading of Hobbes to Derrida's reading of both within the horizon of Hegelian phenomenological disclosure will be difficult to navigate; that is because the reconstruction of Ambedkar's critique of the Gandhian 'fast' event has to (by necessity) take place outside the scope of traditional readings of the Western political philosophical canon. How this occurs is the question. Perhaps it becomes a philosophical question of method when dealing with comparative contexts of political epistemology, or the conditions by which we can even know what we mean by knowledge of the 'political' and even 'political philosophy.' We cannot claim to provide any contribution to the fine, detailed scholarship on Hobbes and Schmitt and how to interpret the texts within their respective historical contexts.[8] This is not making any kind of excuse at whim. We have to appropriate elements and moments in the texts, de-sever any natural intuitive relations within them, which means resist any meaning which may arise from a naturally inhabited Western mindset, and creatively formulate new propositions to deepen the Ambedkarite critique of caste.[9] That is the sole goal of this paper.

Main Text

On Hobbes's *Leviathan*

We turn to a crucial paragraph in Hobbes that is germane for our own investigations. In "Of the Principles of Christian Politiques" in the third Part: "Of A CHRISTIAN COMMON-WEALTH" of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes raises a number of critical issues regarding the relation between man's[10] self-reliant reason,

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[8] See the work of Schwab (1985; 1996; 2008); McKormick (1997).

[9] Earlier we referred to the potentiality of the phenomenological method as developed by Husserl, and a foundational moment in twentieth century continental philosophy. In Vol. II, Part I of his famous *Logical Investigations*, Husserl (2001, 85) defines phenomenology as: "the pure phenomenology of the experiences of thinking and knowing. This phenomenology, like the more inclusive pure phenomenology of experiences in general, has, as its exclusive concern, experiences intuitively seizable and analysable in the pure generality of their essence, not experiences empirically perceived and treated as real facts, as experiences of human or animal experients in the phenomenal world that we posit as an empirical fact. This phenomenology must bring to pure expression, must describe in terms of their essential concepts and their governing formulae of essence, the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition, and the connections which have their roots purely in such essences. Each such statement of essence is an a priori statement in the highest sense of the word. This sphere we must explore in preparation for the epistemological criticism and clarification of pure logic: our investigations will therefore all move within it." Getting to the 'essence' of caste as it is immediately intuited is irreducible to any sociological, historical, anthropological or political conceptions of it.

[10] We prefer to use a more neutral and inclusive gender term than 'man, men, his, him, or he.' We are pointing to Hobbes's seventeenth century context and only refer to his passage. This says nothing about the assumption that only men (and in that heteronormative) can receive

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skepticism, and the paradoxical conditions of obedience to the sovereign vs. God's mediated speech from men to other men: or God's immediate speech to some men who then transmit it or mediate it to other men. Something splits apart in the event of speech, dividing it in which immediacy is something assumed or believed whereas mediation harbors the possibility of always passing itself as immediate when it is not.

The following passage will serve as the point of departure of our analysis. As we read Hobbes, we can graft moments of Ambedkar's critique of Gandhi and his act to fast himself to death while interpreting them within the margins of the *Leviathan*. Hobbes states:

> When God speaketh to man, it must be either immediately; or by the mediation of another man, to whom he had formerly spoken by himself immediately. How God speaketh to a man immediately, may be understood by those well enough, to whom he hath so spoken; but how the same should be understood by another is hard, if not impossible to know. For if a man pretended to me, that God hath spoken to him supernaturally, and immediately, and I can make doubt of it, I cannot easily perceive what argument he can produce, to oblige me to beleeve it. It is true, that if he be my Sovereign, he may oblige me to obedience, so, as not by act or word to declare I beleeve him not; but not to think any otherwise then my reason perswades me. But if one hath not such authority over me, shall pretend the same, there is nothing that exacteth either beleefe, or obedience. (Tuck 2008, 256)

In this passage we have the following elements we can break out:

God is an entity capable of the act to speak immediately to a man and hence man has the capacity to hear God. God's speech to man can occur directly and immediately, which means man has the capability to receive this speech. But with God's infinite will, God can also be that God who speaks to man through mediation of another man, the latter of whom may have received that speech in an immediate way. But one can also doubt God's immediate speech to a man who then transmits it to another man because man's knowledge of God's speech transmitted through other men is not immediate. At this point doubt becomes impossibility of knowledge. From this we find that there is no obligation in the possibility to believe in mediated knowledge (God's speech to man through another man). Obligation to believe then has a tenuous relationship to obligation to be obedient to an authority.

Hence Hobbes raises the issue of what happens when man is a Sovereign. Even if this mediated speech through a Sovereign (God speaking to Sovereign to speak to man) could oblige obedience. Obedience to the Sovereign is exchange for protection when men are uplifted from the state of nature, but then the Sovereign himself is bound to certain duties in his governorship of men. But even at this moment, Hobbes opens up a delimited freedom of man (not the unbridled

knowledge from God or hear God's speech and that only men can become Sovereign. That is not at all the case today in most of the Western world.

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freedom from the state of nature) in his ability to doubt Sovereign's transmission of knowledge about God's immediate speech to the Sovereign. However, if this knowledge transmitted by the Sovereign goes against man's capacity reason (say the Sovereign announces the idea of 'flying horses'), then man has the ability to doubt. Hence obligation to Sovereign is in tension when one goes against their own reason and thus is skeptical of being forced to believe, obliged in believing something or anything at all. Obligation to believe in obedience and the obedience to believe in general becomes questionable.

Put another way, obedience to the Sovereign is one thing, but obedience to the transmission of knowledge (from an immediate experience of God's speech) that is then mediated opens up the possibility of error and hence doubt through reason. Human speech of God's speech has to be by nature susceptible to error if we assume humans are fallible when God isn't. Assuming that obedience can occur through speech and behavior, and such speech and behavior cannot be compelled if they go against reason, then the specter of illegitimacy haunts both the idea of obedience to sovereignty and the obligation to believe in obedience or not in general.

If one is not the Sovereign, and does not have authority over man but still pretends to mediate speech from God (say the Catholic Pope), then there cannot be any confirmation of either belief or obedience to that authority to believe. So, in our concluding reflections of this passage in Hobbes, we have the following deductions.

The possibility of God's immediate speech to a man but also the impossibility of knowing and obliging obedience to that knowledge when that immediate speech to man becomes mediated speech to another men. (Since God is not present as a human being in the flesh today, one can argue beyond faith that all speech about God is human speech about God's speech to humans.)[11] And this is even true if that man who receives this immediate speech from God is the Sovereign, which can oblige obedience in the abstract sense, i.e. transcendence from the state of nature to the social contract. But even there reason can doubt the transmission of God's speech from the Sovereign to other men if what is being transmitted goes against the dictates of reason. Because one only has to doubt that there was a real, single, unique historical event that involved a transition from the state of nature to the so-called 'social contract.'

The question is not whether the 'social contract' is a fiction; the question is whether the transition to it can ever be proved as a real event in human history, which presupposes human consciousness itself as attuned to the very historicity

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[11] One can easily see the relevance of Hegel's early lectures on religion through the *Phenomenology* through his System to the later lectures on the *Philosophy of Religion*, which were so crucial for the eventual development of nineteenth and twentieth century theologies in all Christian traditions, not just the Lutheran and Protestant traditions. For an inventive critique of how about Hegel and scholarship on Hegel treats the philosophy of religion, see Desmond (2003).

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of history. To be historically conscious of transcending the nature vs. history divide it means that one cannot be the same being from the state of nature who then 'leaves' that realm and enters the realm of history (of laws, society, contracts) while remaining intact. But if one assumes irreducible and non-representable alterity even in the form of a faint trace as having been this other being (in the state of nature) prior to being the historically conscious being of the social contract that looks back on the 'leap,' then one can neither conceptualize the discontinuity in the event of transformation from within history; nor can they gloss over the irreducible difference in the name of continuity and presence. If the latter were true, no leap would have ever taken place and no social contract as history itself would have ever come into being. This aporia has everything to do with whether speech can be immediate or mediated, and how that affects obligation to believe in obedience and the obedience to believe in the authority of the Sovereign, not as God, but the historical construction of one human to another that would compel law, order, and peace.

On Ambedkar's Critique of the Mahatma

Let us explore these relations and deductions as we unpack Ambedkar's critique of the Gandhian fast. Let us quote some passages from Ambedkar's "Statement on Gandhiji's Fast":

> As to the Mahatma, I do not know what he wants. (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 191)
>
> The Mahatma is not an immortal person and Congress assuming it is not a malevolent force, is not to have an abiding existence. There have been many Mahatmas in India, whose sole object was to remove untouchability and to elevate and absorb the Depressed Classes, but every one of them has failed in his mission. Mahatmas have come and Mahatmas have gone, but the Untouchables have remained Untouchables. (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192)
>
> Whether he knows it or not, the Mahatma's act will result in nothing but terrorism against the Depressed Classes all over the country. (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192)[12]
>
> Coercion of this sort will not win the Depressed Classes to the Hindu fold if they are determined to go out. And if the Mahatma chooses to ask the Depressed Classes to make a choice between the Hindu faith and possession of political power, I am quite sure that the Depressed Classes will choose political power and save the Mahatma from self-immolation. If Mr. Gandhi coolly reflects on the consequences of his act, I very much doubt whether he will find this victory worth having. It is still more important to note that the Mahatma is a reactionary and uncontrollable force and is fostering a spirit of hatred between the Hindu community and the Depressed Classes by resorting to this method

[12] Mahatma is Sanskrit for 'Great Soul.' The analogue in English would be saintly or holy and someone therefore beloved. In the Merriam-Webster dictionary, it also includes 'high-mindedness, wisdom, and selflessness.'

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> and thereby widening the existing gulf between the two. (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192-193)

Before we get to our phenomenological analysis of the event of the 'fast' and what that means – a will to death as the transcendental materialization of a soul seeking release from the body – we must unpack these passages in Ambedkar through the lens of the Hobbesian deductions we just articulated.

Ambedkar certainly doubts why people should be obedient to the 'Mahatma' who is not a Sovereign in himself because he too is a colonial subject at the time of British rule: that is, prior to the birth of the social contract known as the secular, legal, constitutional, liberal, democratic state of post-Independence India. Ambedkar gives us a negative, unflattering sense of Mahatma because he doesn't know who Mahatma 'is' and 'what he wants.' He knows what he is not, namely an 'immortal person.' Mahatma has a strange ontological finitude, one can say, and, like the Congress party, is not something that should have an 'abiding existence.' One can ask in a democracy whether any party should last forever, and perhaps the true hallmark of individual liberty and equality is that new parties should arise: democracy by nature resists permanency.

Ambedkar makes the point of temporariness, which we will have to examine further, when he says that 'Mahatmas have come and gone' but 'Untouchability remains.' One can ask about the nature of the caste system and its bizarre historicity: untouchability remains like a substrate beneath the vicissitudes of historical change, say the precolonial to colonial and soon to be postcolonial independent India. In mystery of this alterior entity, whose Being one can say is the permanent 'outside' to the fourfold caste system, historicity and eternity are not naturally opposed. This will help us bracket what the Mahatma's Being-towards-death[13] in the phenomenological event of the fast

[13] This is an obvious reference to Heidegger's ideas on time and death in division II of *Being and Time*. Heidegger (1963, 255) states in Chapter I of Division II: "In our preliminary existential sketch, Being-towards-the-end has been defined as Being towards one's own most potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and is not to be outstripped. Being towards this possibility, as a Being which exists, is brought face to face with the absolute impossibility of existence. Beyond this seemingly empty characterization of Being-towards-death, there has been revealed the concretion of this Being in the mode of everydayness. In accordance with the tendency to falling, which is essential to everydayness, Being-towards-death has turned out to be an evasion in the face of death – an evasion which conceals. While our investigation has hitherto passed from a formal sketch of the ontological structure of death to the concrete analysis of everyday Being-towards-the-end, the direction is now to be reversed, and we shall arrive at the full existential conception of death by rounding out our Interpretation of everyday Being-towards-the-end." We will have to return to Heidegger in the background, as we move through Derrida on Schmitt and Hobbes as we explore Ambedkar's critique of the inauthenticity one can say of the Mahatma's Being-towards-death in the event of the fast and its totalitarian and political implications: namely the perdurance of the concealed evil (an 'evasion in the face of real death') that is the caste system's relation to alterity and exteriority

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reveals about this permanency: namely untouchability in contrast to the temporary, non-immortal quality of the Mahatma.

Returning to Ambedkar's critique of the specious 'sovereignty' of the Mahatma, on the question of untouchability we can make the following deductions. In a way, Mahatma's wager on his own life as ultimate proof of the transcendental nature of his sovereignty, or that the Indian masses will follow his preferences unquestionably, is no simple event. But this reveals something deep in the heart of the Hindu metaphysical system of the caste. Before expanding on Ambedkar's critique of the Gandhian fast, let us try to analyze how Gandhi justifies morally his continuation of untouchability, while denying them a separate electorate, and what that means for the justification of his peculiar self-conception as a sovereign.

In a paradoxical sense, the Mahatma perpetuates the illusion of immortality. He does so with the game of brinkmanship, his being-towards-death, because, in a way, the wager is not as risky as it would appear to another moral. The Mahatma perpetrates that he could certainly go all the way and come good on his commitment to self-annihilate; but, in a way, he crosses over that act of finality for any other human being, he crosses over and crosses out his death because as the 'great Soul' – he is a transcendental sovereign being. But, in the second sense, he crosses over and crosses out death (before the actual event of physical death, which never comes because he ends up suspending his fast), the 'great Soul' is guaranteed preservation in the general migration of souls, or the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation. If Heidegger, for example defines death as the "possibility of impossibility" and therefore Dasein's greatest possibility "to be" itself authentically is death (Heidegger 1963, 294, 303, 309), then we have something a bit more contorted in the Gandhian event. Death in the Gandhian fast is the impossibility of both the possibility of impossibility and the impossibility of possibility, but ultimately the impossibility of all impossibility itself because death is not a point in time[14]: it is an illusion of an event with the reality of a crossover with the promised belief of reincarnation. Death is not anticipated, rebirth is, and hence death is meaningless.

But reincarnation in Hindu metaphysics is like an inverted soul, an exteriority in the form of imprisonment which is the caste system. The soul is what is punished through the body, and not a disciplining of the body to judge

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that is irreducible, namely the preservation of the Dalit 'untouchability.' The future democracy that will emerge from the Mahatma's perspective is really a perversion at work akin to what motivates Derrida through Schmitt and Hobbes to question the nature of neoliberal democracies in general.

[14] At some point it would be interesting to compare Heidegger's views on death in *Being and Time*, Derrida on Heidegger's views on death, and at the time the long-awaited views of Derrida himself on the matter in his *Aporias* (1993), and our attempt in reading Ambedkar while elaborating our own phenomenological deconstruction of how death and its impossibility function in the Hindu metaphysical system of caste. See Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

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the soul. That caste system could not function without a constituted 'Other' – that demonic, impure, irreducible exteriority, which cannot be conceptualized or reduced to the movement of the soul in time or the movement of time in the soul. By trapping the Dalit/formerly known as 'untouchable' in their state of irreducible exteriority and social exclusion, the entire mechanism of caste can continue. And that is the Gandhian feat of the fast. His sovereignty in a way is derived from this paradox of an illusion of the 'immortal God' but also the impossibility of being finite – a one-time occurrence in which all human beings literally only live once and die once regardless of Abrahamic, monotheistic conceptions of an afterlife.[15]

So now let us connect this thinking with how Gandhi justifies his sovereign act of the fast with Ambedkar's political critique of its danger and harm, particularly to the Dalits. Reading the Ambedkar passages again, we see that what is actually concealed in this Gandhian movement towards a crossed out death to another rebirth is the perpetuation of a 'terror.' The horror of the caste system and its outside Other is the continued demonization, chastisement, torture, oppression, seclusion and violence perpetrated by both public citizens and the state, as India begins to imagine its post-Independent, post-colonial secular, liberal, legal, constitutional democracy. Ambedkar even uses the word 'terrorism.' (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192)

Let us in conclusion explore this question: What is the nature of this 'terrorism' embedded in the sovereign act of a will to self-annihilate, namely the Gandhian fast? For Ambedkar, Gandhi's attempt to preserve the caste system and the status of the Dalit as the outsider with no separate electorate forces no other choice by the Dalits but to fight for their political freedom and power. For Ambedkar, the Gandhian threat to self-annihilate will only sow more animus and 'hatred' between the Hindu masses and the Dalit 'community' as he says (Thorat and Kumar 2009, 192-193). For Ambedkar, Gandhi is an 'uncontrollable force,' and as we shall see later in Derrida's ruminations, it turns out the sovereign as personified 'state' stands above the law, whereas the 'animal' falls below it into 'nature.' But this is also what binds them together in a strange way (Derrida 2009, 17).[16] Who pays the price in this model? The human does.

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[15] Even in the in the Abrahamic faiths, one only lives and dies once as a human being, and does not reincarnate into different human beings across generations. For a good comparison of the respective theologies of the world religions, see Knitter (2002).

[16] Furthermore, Derrida (2009, 16) states: "The question is all the more obscure and necessary for the fact that the minimal feature that must be recognized in the position of sovereignty, at this scarcely even preliminary stage, is, as we insisted these last few years with respect to Schmitt, a certain power to *give*, to *make*, but also to *suspend* the law; it is the exceptional right to place oneself above right, the right to non-right, if I can say this, which both runs the risk of carrying the human sovereign above the human, toward divine omnipotence (which will moreover most often have grounded the principle of sovereignty in its sacred and theological origin), and, because of this arbitrary suspension or rupture of the right, runs the risk of making the sovereign look like the most brutal beast who respects nothing, scorns the law,

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Yet we are not looking from within a Western context and we cannot refer to the unity, self-sameness, and unicity of a monotheistic theological origin. Instead, if we follow the logic of Ambedkar's critique we have a lot more to deal with than the familiar terms of man, animal, sovereign, law, God, and the state in our Western vernacular.[17] Returning to Ambedkar, we can say we have the following terms: the fourfold Hindu caste in the transmigration of souls, so let us call that the so-called supra-human; the oppressed or 'depressed' Other, or Dalit, as the constituted outsider and hence Other and outside the human or anti-human; a non-identifiable conception of the human itself, because what is more than human will be the 'great Soul' Mahatma which can only persist by having what is less than human, namely the Depressed Dalit/formerly known as 'untouchable,' remain in its depressed state; the linkage of the Mahatma, which is not an 'immortal person,' but also the paradox of an eternal historicity whose being-towards death crosses over and cancels death as a possibility (or impossibility) due to the anticipation of reincarnation or rebirth; and the Ambedkarite critique of the Gandhian fast as one of the 'uncontrollable force and reactionary' that breeds 'hatred.' It is very hard to identify a fixed meaning about the human in general within this bizarre system whose origins from antiquity are unknown. Ultimately, Ambedkar finds Gandhi's thinking to be an inscrutable mystery and that he doesn't really know what Gandhi wants (Thorat and Kumar, 2009, 191). By extension, one can harbor a guess as to whether Gandhi himself knows what he wants.

There is a lot to unpack here, given all these terms and ways to imagine their differences, relations and interrelations. Corroborating our thesis there is an inherent skepticism as to whether the political epistemologies of Hobbes, Schmitt, and Derrida's deconstruction of both (the 'Western history of the concept of sovereignty') can help us unpack this monstrous complexity. So we have to invent new terms and see how the deductive relations begin to appear.

Conclusion

So in conclusion let us venture some postulates to see exactly what we are dealing with beyond what Ambedkar himself could articulate. This way we can anticipate how we may compare and contrast our phenomenological

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immediately situates himself above the law, at a distance from the law. For the current representation, to which we are referring for a start, sovereign and beast seem to have in commontheir being-outside-the-law." Derrida is operating with the Western historical context and its particular onto-theological foundations, namely the Judeo-Christian structure. So in some senses his distinctions and terms (sovereign and beast in relation to man and the theological origin) are not easily transferrable to the Eastern context of Hinduism as we shall see. Derrida says: "And is the complex, although relatively short, history of the concept of sovereignty in the West (a concept that is itself an institution that we shall try to study as well as we can)…"

[17] Terms that Hobbes, Schmitt, and Derrida alike have to reckon.

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deconstruction of the Gandhian event of the fast with the paradoxes, puzzles, and depths of categories, terms and relations that we find in Hobbes and Schmitt, and Derrida's deconstructive reading of them. But we need to question the inherent limits of this Western tradition too.

Our thinking goes something like this. We cannot assume notions of an impersonal machine with its objective features and qualities known as the sovereign state: one that has external, physical, geographic boundaries, and is held together by political systems, bureaucratic functions in the public sector, a centralized state with branches of government, and a military and police force that upholds and enforces the laws. Western theories of the state and punishment fail us.[18] But we also cannot turn to a Creator God before the first moment of time when humans, plants, and animal life were created. The monotheistic luxury of an origin to everything by one unified Being cannot be presupposed. Hence the distinctions and the attempt to see the mediation between immediate opposites in a movement of differentiation, relations, and syntheses, say the sovereign as a synthesis between the anthropological and the divine, are tenuous at best. But the Derridean terms, or paradoxically that which is above the law or outside, which it shares with the animal too but in a different way, also tend to dissolve in the complexity we have to handle.[19]

The Gandhian sovereign is a social body built upon caste, which requires both the distance and enslavement of something other to the human and hence not below it in nature, like the animal, or above it, like a transcendental God, which has the power to 'give or make the law' as Derrida (2009, 17) says. The being-towards death is not a stamp of finality and finitude but nor is it a type of illusory timelessness or immortality, as Ambedkar says; it is other to the finite and infinite, crossing out and preserving their difference, thus pointing to an irreducible third horizon, which cannot be spatialized. In this bizarre metaphysics, death is not a point in time but a stretched event of passage in which anticipated re-birth recapitulates and guarantees the cycle of previous births. One can say a being towards two 'ends' is that between being-towards-birth and being-toward-rebirth.[20] The asymmetric irreducible other to this progression is the in-human or the carrier of human waste/excrement and the non-sacral dead body (since the purity of the migrating soul is what is at stake) and that is the Dalit/formerly known as 'untouchable.'

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[18] A separate reading of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975) on these issues and a creative expansion of their terms would be a fruitful project in that regard.

[19] This is also why we are not too quick to judge or reduce Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* to some clear-cut three moment dialectic which follows a linear progression. Hegel still forms the horizon by which we can approach Hobbes before him and Schmitt and Derrida after him.

[20] Again, contrast that with chapter V of Division II of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, where he speaks of the 'two ends of Dasein' as 'being-towards-death' and 'being-towards-birth.' See Heidegger (1963, 425).

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The Gandhian fast or the wager that he will go all the way through to self-annihilation is like that false immortal Sovereign sacrificing himself in order to preserve the metaphysical-social body of caste: the new terrorism will then hide beneath the surface of a future, secular, legal, constitutional, liberal democracy pretending to guarantee 'equality, liberty, and fraternity.'[21] One would have to say in this model, the sovereign turns paradoxically the state of nature into democracy, the idea of law becomes antithetical to individual freedom in the preservation of caste and the enslaved Outside, namely the impure Dalit, and the obligation to obedience is not one to the state or law but the myth of the highest act of Being, namely self-annihilation: the Gandhian event of the fast is the crescendo of the entire system where all can witness the truth of this Hindu metaphysical system, the crossing over, crossing out, passing through to the outside or the rebirth that cancels death. Forcing the witness to the event creates the unconscious obedience, necessary for a type of sovereignty that will then be irreducible to any future Western conception of the social contract and liberal democratic state. What this witness is escapes the vocabulary of Western metaphysics and therefore its political philosophy.

To unpack the totality of this mystery requires a steady dismantling of what is at work in the Hobbesian and Schmittian texts but also the highly original and clever reading of them in Derrida's lectures on the *Beast and the Sovereign*. The post-9/11 historical context of the early 2000s in which Derrida gave those lectures takes on an eerie significance, but for an entirely different historical context, namely the dawn of post-colonial independent India. Both contexts attempt to deal with the phenomenon of 'terrorism.' Through Ambedkar, we find that what appeared to be an act of a sacrificial martyr figure who promised peace, hope, and collective compassion was in fact one of a monstrous Other himself – the inhuman logic to keep certain human beings in an inhuman state precisely in the false finitude of a transcendental immortality rooted solely in myth: that death can be surpassed and hence embraced as the highest act of salvation for all precisely when it is deemed illusory. But this precisely is what did not happen in post-Independent Indian democracy, namely the creation of a non-violent, collective compassion. The caste system remains and therefore the Dalit role of the formerly known as 'untouchable' endures while yet another 'Mahatma' has come and gone.

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[21] That is what the beginning of the modern Indian Constitution proclaims as its goal. Accessed April 14th 2019 https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Constitution_of_India/Preamble.

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